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Training Strategies for Increasing Employee Job Satisfaction and Retention in the Hospitality Industry

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Felix L. Djeumo Sandjong

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Walden University
2021

Abstract

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by

Felix L. Djeumo Sandjong

MBA, Strayer University Washington DC, 2018

BS, Private Institute of Higher Studies of Sousse Tunisia, 2011

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

March 2021

Abstract

High voluntary employee turnover remains one of the most critical issues managers are striving to resolve. A lack of strategies to reduce high voluntary employee turnover by hospitality managers leads to low employee retention and loss. Grounded in McClelland's needs theory, the purpose of this multiple case study was to explore strategies hospitality small business leaders use to implement effective training programs leading to an acceptable level of employee retention. The participants were five hospitality small business leaders in the Washington, DC area who directed their companies' training programs and increased employee retention through implementing effective training programs. Data were collected from semistructured interviews and company documents and were analyzed with thematic data analysis. Three themes emerged from the analysis: using one-on-one purpose-driven training, demonstrating investment in employees, and fostering a sense of open communication and community among staff members. One key recommendation was to offer regular opportunities for professional development to hourly and salaried workers. The implications for positive social change include the potential for increased employee job satisfaction and retention to increase customer satisfaction, which can create growth for businesses, thus providing jobs and tax revenues for communities.

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Dedication

At the outset, I dedicate this doctoral final study to Almighty God for his magnanimities over my life. Second, I dedicate this doctoral final study to my better half, Vera Afuh Mbah, for all her support. Third, I dedicate this doctoral final study to my children, Rochel, Clairane, Verisa, and Felisa for their inspiration and support all through my doctoral journey. To my entire family, especially my elder sister Djeumo Ndengoue Therese Gladice and my elder brother Djeumo Ngameleu Jacques Robert for their prayers. For my deceased mother, Dessiji Genevieve I wish she will still be alive today to celebrate my accomplishments with me.

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I thank my chair, Dr. Scott Hipsher, for his remarkable guidance and instructions throughout my doctoral study. I will everlastingly be appreciative to my chair, Dr. Scott Hipsher, for his exemplary teaching and guidance throughout my doctoral study. I am appreciative to Dr. Kate Andrews as a doctoral second committee member. I express gratitude toward Dr. Kenneth Grossett as my URR during the last phase of the proposal review process. I also express gratitude to Dr. Susan Davis, as former program director. Thank you all for providing a positive learning environment and inspiring me to become a better scholar.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Background of the Problem

Retaining employees in the hospitality industry remains a pressing issue as workers are important for organizational success (Baharin & Hanafi, 2018). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018), the annual turnover rate for employees in the hospitality industry was 73.8% and exponentially higher than the national annual average of 44.5% with over 6% of employees leaving each month. But in the 21st century business environment, the tendency is to reduce the spending on training programs, which could result in employee dissatisfaction within the hospitality industry (Jehanzeb et al., 2015). High voluntary employee turnover remains an issue that managers are striving to resolve with retention strategies in the hospitality industry (Nica, 2016). Managers may rely on employee retention strategies to reduce involuntary employee turnover (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017).

Problem Statement

A lack of employee training programs, resulting in poor job satisfaction, is one of the leading causes of employee turnover in many organizations (Cloutier et al., 2015). According to the researchers at the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018), approximately 3.5 million people or 2.3% of the entire workforce quit their jobs voluntarily in the United States often due to a lack of job satisfaction. The general business problem was that business leaders who do not implement training programs may experience high employee turnover. The specific business problem was that some hospitality small business leaders lack strategies to implement effective training programs leading to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies hospitality small business leaders use to implement effective training programs leading to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention. The target population for this study consisted of five hospitality small businesses leaders who oversee their companies' training programs located in the Washington, DC area and have successfully increased employee job satisfaction and retention. The implications for positive social change include the potential for increased employee job satisfaction and retention to increase customer satisfaction, which can create growth for businesses by providing jobs and tax revenues for communities, possibly leading to the construction of new bridges, roads, schools, and highways.

Nature of the Study

Three types of research methods have been commonly identified by other researchers: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (Yin, 2018). A qualitative methodology was chosen for this study, as the intent was to interview participants and review important information and available documentation. I considered quantitative and mixed methodologies, but the qualitative methodology was chosen due to the intended purpose of the research study. In a qualitative study, a researcher often uses open-ended interviews questions, observations, and/or content analysis to gather the data for the research (Choy, 2014). In this qualitative study, I used the participants' answers to the open-ended questions to analyze patterns and identify themes. In contrast, researchers using quantitative methodology often seek to test a set of hypotheses regarding a phenomenon by using quantifiable data to reveal patterns and to generalize findings to a larger population (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). The researcher can use a mixed approach to build on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies by helping to corroborate and enhance the findings gained from both methodologies (Rapanta & Felton, 2019). Quantitative and mixed methodologies would not be appropriate for this study because the goal was not to examine the relationships among variables with the intent of analyzing and representing a numerical relationship through statistical data.

Narrative, phenomenological, ethnographical, and case study designs are the four types of qualitative research designs that are most commonly used by researchers in doing qualitative research (Ridder, 2017). A qualitative multiple case study research design was chosen for this study because the intention was to identify and explore both similarities and differences across cases. Researchers can increase the analytical benefits of their research using multiple case studies as opposed to a single case study (Yin, 2018). Researchers often investigate the cases by comparing the target population's differences and similarities that emerge from multiple sources of evidence for moving toward theory generation (Ketokivi & Choi, 2014). Researchers often prefer to use case studies as a research strategy when asking *what*, *how*, and *why* questions, using techniques such as observations, interviews, and archival research methods (Yazan, 2015). I choose a multiple case study design because my intent was to identify strategies to increase employee job satisfaction and retention in the hospitality business through an in-depth comparison of cases and exploration of the research question.

Regarding other designs, researchers using a narrative design study the experiences of individuals or groups using the narration of the personal-life stories of the participants (Saunders et al., 2015). Narrative design was inappropriate for this study because the personal-life stories of an individual or groups of participants would not address the primary research question. Researchers use the phenomenological design to grasp the significance of personal meanings of the participants' lived experiences (Thompson, 2018). A phenomenological design was not appropriate for this study because the goal was not to study the personal meanings of the lived experiences of participants. Using an ethnographical design enables researchers to explore the culture of the participants (Baskerville & Myers, 2015). The use of an ethnographical design was not appropriate for this study because the primary focus of my study was not on the culture of the participants. A case study was determined to be the best research design for this study because I used empirical inquiry to explore a phenomenon within its real-life context (see Ridder, 2017).

Qualitative Research Question

What strategies do hospitality leaders use to implement effective training programs for job satisfaction and employee retention?

Interview Questions

1. What strategies have you used to effectively train employees in your organization that led to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention?
2. Of these strategies, which ones did you find worked best to increase job satisfaction and employee retention?
3. What were the principal barriers you have encountered when you first attempted to implement effective training programs that increased job satisfaction and employee retention?
4. How did your organization address the principal challenges to implementing its successful strategies for increasing job satisfaction and employee retention?
5. How did your employees respond to your strategies in creating training programs designed to lead to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention?
6. What strategies have you found to be ineffective for creating job satisfaction and retaining employees?
7. What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies you have used for increasing job satisfaction and retaining employees?
8. Which of those strategies would you consider the most valuable for increasing employee job satisfaction and retention through training?

9. What else would you like to discuss about your organization’s strategies to implement effective training programs for increasing employee job satisfaction and retention?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is based on McClelland’s needs theory, which McClelland created in 1961 and is considered one of the most important of the behavioral-based theories (Facer et al., 2014). McClelland was a psychologist who advocated for the needs theory and believed individuals obtain their specific needs over a period and these are forged from one’s experience of life (Rybnicek et al., 2019). McClelland sought to explore how the needs for achievement, power, and affiliation shape the actions of people from a managerial context (Khurana & Joshi, 2017). Proponents of behavioral-based theories emphasize the motivating factors impacting behavior toward a job (Wang & Hou, 2015). McClelland stated that workers have different needs that employers should meet in creating job satisfaction and retaining employees in the workforce (Moorer, 2014). The need for affiliation explains an individual’s need to feel a sense of involvement and belonging within a social group and the need for achievement reflects a worker’s desire for accomplishments, mastering of skills through training, control, or high standards (Wakabi, 2016). Workers with a strong need for power have the tendency to want to control other employees within the workforce, and they enjoy being in charge (Ferinia & Hutagalung, 2017). This conceptual framework was applicable to my study because every employee has needs and effective training programs can address those needs and can lead to increasing their job satisfaction and retaining them in the workforce. Additionally, McClelland’s needs theory is a motivational theory, and motivation is at the core of the creation of employee satisfaction that may lead to an increase of employee retention in the workforce and may help illuminate the study’s findings.

Operational Definitions

This study includes several terms that need definition for readers to gain a better understanding of their use. The definitions of these terms are as follows:

Employee job satisfaction: Employee job satisfaction is the length to which employees feel self-motivated, fulfilled, and satisfied with the organization they are part of (Kianto et al., 2016).

Employee retention: Employee retention refers to the various policies and practices that encourage the employees to remain in an organization for a significant period of time. (Cloutier et al., 2015).

Employee motivation: Employee motivation represents the level of energy, commitment, and creativity that workers in an organization demonstrate in their jobs daily (Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016).

Small business: Small business is an independently owned and operated for-profit organization restricted in size, revenue, and the industry of interest with fewer than 50 employees (Anastasia, 2015).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Researchers must clearly identify the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the research when conducting a study. Clearly identifying the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations will convince the reader the results of the study are not inflated and are unbiased (Cudziło et al., 2018).

Assumptions

Assumptions in research are non-validated elements that tangible evidence cannot support (Cudziło et al., 2018). The following assumptions may be present in the study. First, I assumed the participants have experience and knowledge on implementing training programs to improve employee job satisfaction and increase employee retention in the hospitality small business industry. Second, I assumed participants were truthful and objective in their responses to the interview questions, which ensured the reliability and validity of the study's findings. The third assumption was that the interviewees' knowledge and views accurately reflect the successful accomplishment of attaining an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention in the hospitality small business industry.

Limitations

Limitations are imperfections in the research study outside the control of the researcher (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). Limitations threaten the internal validity of a study, which a researcher cannot control. The most crucial limitation of this study is the inability to generalize the study findings due to the geographic location of the study. The interview participants were in the United States, which limits the generalizability of the findings. My findings may not be applicable to other countries due to differences in governance systems, organizational policies, management techniques, and implementation strategies. Another limitation of this study is some participants may have provided biased responses to interview questions (Kallio et al., 2016).

Delimitations

Delimitations are the boundaries that restrict the scope of the study (Inkinen, 2016). Delimitations for this study include the years of leadership experience, size of businesses, and the geographic location of the study. First, this study limited participation to leaders with experience successfully overseeing training programs in the hospitality industry. Second, I only included small-sized hospitality businesses. Large and medium hospitality businesses were excluded from this study. Small businesses employ fewer than 50 employees (Karadag, 2015). Third, I only included small hospitality businesses located in the Washington DC area.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

The findings of this study may contribute to improved business practices because I identified effective training programs leading to increasing employee job satisfaction and employee retention in the hospitality industry. Additionally, the use of training programs may contribute to enhancing organizational quality standards yielding guidelines to consistently ensure that materials, products, processes, and services fit the intended purposes (Rogala et al., 2017). Incorporating training programs may help an organization to reduce the cost of recruitment because workers are more likely to remain with an organization that satisfies their job needs (Campos et al., 2017). Employees perceive training programs as an investment for their futures and are less likely to change employers when they feel valued by their organizations (Riley et al., 2017). The results from effective training programs can contribute significantly to the U.S. economy by increasing organizational productivity, strengthening employee skills, and increasing compliance with relevant laws, policies, and regulations (Tahir et al., 2014).

Implications for Social Change

The implications for positive social change involve a possible increase in the living standards of employees through an increase of employees’ salaries as they ascend through various positions of responsibility in their organizations due to the mastery of working processes by the employees. The findings of the study may help to improve incomes in the local economies, increase job opportunities for families, and enhance the growth of educational opportunities for the betterment of communities’ citizens.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies hospitality small business leaders use to implement effective training programs leading to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention. The target population for this study consisted of five hospitality small businesses leaders who oversee their company’s developmental training programs located in Washington, DC and have successfully increased employee job satisfaction and retention. An exploration of motivational theories in the workplace and the link to McClelland needs theory will occur in the context of this study. The following areas related to the study’s problem statement contribute to this review: (a) motivational theories in the workplace; (b) McClelland and self-determination in hospitality; (c) organizational culture and leadership; (d) transformational leadership, satisfaction, and retention; (e) training; and (f) training in hospitality.

Search Strategy

A review of material from the Walden University library, academic journals, and dissertations informed this literature review. The primary databases used were EBSCOhost, Google Scholar, numerous business journals, ProQuest, and SAGE Publications. The search criteria or the study was based on the terms *training, satisfaction, motivation, retention, hospitality, business leaders, leadership, employee turnover, workforce,* and *small businesses*. In reviewing the literature for this study, I incorporated 152 sources, 131 of which were peer-reviewed references at 86% and 116, which were published in 2015 or later at 89%.

Motivational Theory in the Workplace

The topic of workplace motivation is one of the most important fields of study receiving attention from researchers and human resource practitioners. Within the context regarding theories of motivation, there are numerous definitions explaining the meanings and sources of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Theorists describe work motivation as the psychological processes that affect an individual’s intention and course of behavior in addition to strength and perseverance (Babalola et al., 2016).

Motivation is crucial for high employee performance as motivation levels affect the level of effort employees expend towards achieving job objectives; therefore, it is important to understand how leaders can motivate employees to greater performance (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018). Theoretically, motivational factors are either intangible or tangible and organizational culture, effective leadership, and monetary reward systems are key factors identified for employee motivation (Marshall et al., 2015). Organizational culture refers to accepted sets of values and habits in the organization (Buil et al., 2019).). Leadership behaviors, such as mentoring and guidance, can provide stimuli for hard work and increased employee effort, whereas policies and regulations guide performance as well as affect both employee conduct and team performance (King & Haar, 2017). The motivational strategies adopted by an organization may help the organization attract top candidates as well as influence current employees to work more diligently. Effective motivational strategies depend on the context, making it important to understand key theories that relate to motivation and work behavior.

McClelland’s Needs Theory

The conceptual framework for this study is based on McClelland’s needs theory, which is considered one of the most important behavioral-based theories related to motivation (McClelland et al., 1980). McClelland suggested that needs for achievement, power, and affiliation influence behavior (Khurana & Joshi, 2017). Achievement refers to excelling and attaining success, power describes influence on others and being in control, and affiliation describes interpersonal relationships and cooperation (Rybnicek et al., 2019). Further, the need for achievement reflects a worker’s desire for accomplishments, such as mastering skills through training, control, or high standards, the need for affiliation explains an individual’s need to feel a sense of involvement and belonging within a social group, and the need for power is the tendency to want to control other employees within the workforce and being in charge (Ferinia & Hutagalung, 2017).

Achievement Needs. McClelland suggested in his theory of needs that human conduct is based on the needs of the individual. Highly motivated individuals tend to possess high achievement needs; they are competitive in the workplace and can handle challenging tasks effectively (Marshall et al., 2015). They can also tap into opportunities for promotion and can present strong feedback based on work accomplishments. Employees with higher achievement needs derive satisfaction from accomplishing higher goals. There is a link between high performance and high achievement; highly motivated individuals are usually high performers, and they often raise the bar for others to follow and may value accomplishment of intangible goals more than monetary rewards (Marshall et al., 2015).

Affiliation Needs. People motivated by a need for affiliation seek acceptance, harmonious affiliations, open relationships, and positive interactions with others (Schultheiss et al., 2014). Furthermore, people with a strong need for affiliation are often well-loved, exhibit team spirit, and conform to work group situations and norms, which provide significant personal interactions (McClelland et al., 1980). Therefore, people with a need for affiliation are often good performers in customer service and settings which require client interactions (Schultheiss et al., 2014).

Power Needs. People with a high need for power are authority motivated; they seek to be influential, efficient, impactful, strive to lead, desire to further their ideas, and are individuals driven to increase their prestige and status (Scholer & Miele, 2016). Additionally, people with a high need for power may seek the authority to advance institutional or personal goals (McClelland et al., 1980). At times, individuals with personal needs for power manifest disagreeable authoritarian tendencies toward others, which may lead to some form of resistance from subordinates (Scholer & Miele, 2016). People who exhibit the need for social or institutional power tend to be more efficient; they want to manage other people toward furthering the goals of their organizations (Khurana & Joshi, 2017).

Applicability of McClelland's Needs Theory. McClelland's needs theory was appropriate as the conceptual framework for this study designed to explore strategies hospitality leaders use to implement effective training programs leading to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention within the hospitality industry. Within McClelland's needs theory is the understanding employees have a variety of needs employers should meet to create job satisfaction and employee retention (Moorer, 2014). As the goal of this study was to determine effective strategies for increasing hospitality employees' level of job satisfaction, the three types of employee needs (achievement, affiliation, and power) identified in McClelland's needs theory provided the opportunity to develop strategies for training employees and increasing the likelihood for job satisfaction and retention in the workforce.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Maslow (1943) theorized a five-stage hierarchy of needs, which focused on a person's motivation. Maslow focused on the satisfaction of different personal needs through work as a key source of motivation. He portrayed this hierarchy of needs as a pyramid with physiological needs at the bottom and self-actualization at the summit (Maslow, 1943). As such, a person must satisfy the most fundamental needs to progress from the base of the pyramid toward self-actualization at the top of the pyramid (Rasskazova et al., 2016). In between these extremes lay safety needs, social needs, and esteem needs (Maslow, 1943). Self-actualization refers to the need to fulfill potential and grow intellectually (Singh & Behera, 2016). According to Maslow's theory, individuals will acknowledge or pursue higher needs in the hierarchy only after they have recognized and satisfied needs lower in the hierarchy (D'souza & Gurin, 2016).

Lower-Order and Higher-Order Needs. The hierarchy of needs postulates that unsatisfied needs motivate people. Within this hierarchical design, needs align with two categories: lower-order and higher-order (Maslow, 1943). Physiological and safety needs are lower-order and are mostly satisfied externally (Rasskazova et al., 2016), whereas social, esteem, and self-actualization needs are higher-order and are satisfied internally (D'souza & Gurin, 2016). At the base of Maslow's theory is the required satisfaction of fundamental physiological needs, such as food, water, safety, and security before an individual can progress to the next step (Rasskazova et al., 2016). If the person is unable to realize these needs, the person is not able to continue toward higher-level goals, and instead the person's motivation would remain focused on fulfilling these basic needs (Singh & Behera, 2016).

The focus of the second level of Maslow's hierarchy is on the attainment of psychological needs, including a sense of belonging, love, and self-esteem (Singh & Behera, 2016). Only after realizing the achievement of both physiological and psychological needs can a person's motivation begin to focus on the realization of one's full potential, also known as self-actualization (Singh & Behera, 2016). As such, without the fulfillment of both physiological and psychological requirements an individual will not move toward specific goals (Rasskazova et al., 2016).

Implications of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. The implications of this theory for administration include salaries adequate for purchases to fulfill physiological needs (D'souza & Gurin, 2016). At the same time, job security, retirement benefits, and a safe work environment are important motivators for employee effort, which constitute safety needs (D'souza & Gurin, 2016). Whereas teamwork and work-related social events can fulfill employees' social needs, feelings of value and receiving rewards help to meet employees' self-esteem needs (Rasskazova et al., 2016). To fulfill self-actualization needs, employees need challenging jobs and development opportunities (D'souza & Gurin, 2016). The limitations of this theory include differences between levels of importance for each individual (Rasskazova et al., 2016). The theory also excludes scenarios in which employees focus on achievement despite unmet lower needs (Singh & Behera, 2016).

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg (1966) developed his two-factor theory of motivation in 1959, and since that time it has received extensive citation in business literature (Alshmemri et al., 2017). The two-dimensional factors that influence work attitudes described in the theory are the hygiene factors and motivators. Herzberg theorized that to achieve optimal performance an individual should meet both hygiene and motivation factors (Alfayad & Arif, 2017). The hygiene factors, also termed "dissatisfiers" or maintenance factors, represent job factors that enable employee motivation (Wang et al., 2019). Hygiene factors involve necessary conditions to meet functional requirements (Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016). In a work context, this includes factors such as working conditions, relationships with coworkers, wages, and the quality of the supervisor (Mekraz et al., 2016). Hygiene factors are factors used to describe the work environment, including company policy, salary structure, safe working environment, fair administration, benefits, workers' rights, job security, and good interpersonal relations (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Although meeting hygiene factors does not lead to long-term satisfaction, their absence leads to dissatisfaction in the workplace (Alshmemri et al., 2017). According to Herzberg, when there is a deficiency in these fundamental hygiene needs, it is the responsibility of the manager to improve them (Khurana & Joshi, 2017).

Once management address and meet the employees' hygiene factors, managers can enact the second set of factors related to motivation, which would then move employee's toward satisfaction (Khurana & Joshi, 2017). Motivational factors, such as a sense of achievement, recognition, responsibility, and opportunities for growth, are inherent to work and create satisfaction (Inkinen, 2016). Motivators correlate with sustained high performance, whereas hygiene factors were only related to short-term changes in performance (Matthews et al., 2018).

The limitations of this theory include a lack of accounting for situational variables, and an assumption that employee satisfaction correlates with productivity, even when productivity is ignored (Deci & Ryan, 2014). As this study relied primarily on data from interviews from managers, it would have been difficult to separate the hygiene and motivator impact from training. Therefore, Herzberg's theory was not selected as the primary framework for the study.

Vroom's Expectancy Theory

Vroom (1964) stated that the level of performance is based on the intensity of expectations that a specific level of effort will yield a definite outcome as well as the employee's evaluation of the appeal of that outcome. As such, an employee's motivation is based on valence or the extent to which that reward is desired, the expectancy or assumptions of expected outcomes from the expended efforts, and instrumentality or the belief that performance would yield rewards (Mekraz et al., 2016). Thus, the theory essentially describes three sets of relationships: effort-performance, performance-reward, and rewards-personal goals (Deci et al., 2017). Vroom's theory emphasizes the level of effort proffered by an employee is based on a conscious choice, and that choice is based on motivational levels (Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016). Levels of motivation in turn depend on expectancy, valence, and instrumentality (Deci et al., 2017).

The advantage of this theory is it identifies self-interest as an important factor in motivation (Heckmann et al., 2016). To further explain, an employee is working to realize maximum satisfaction while minimizing dissatisfaction. This theory also emphasizes perceptions, expectations, rewards, trade-offs, and psychological extravagance (King et al., 2017). The theory, however, is idealistic, as relatively few people associate performance with rewards, and reward and performance do not always align in many organizations (Heckmann et al., 2016). Rather, rewards tend to align with education, position, effort, and responsibility (Deery & Jago, 2015).

Equity Theory

The focus of equity theory is on rewards (Lichtenberg et al., 2016). Misalignment of rewards may be related to being either over-rewarded or under-rewarded (Kossivi et al., 2016). In an under-rewarded situation, there is a perception by the employee that they are putting in more effort than another worker while receiving comparable reward or less (McPhail et al., 2015). In an over-rewarded situation, there is a perception by the employee of receiving more reward when compared to other employees who are putting in the same level of effort or more (Lichtenberg et al., 2016). Education, salary, gender, and skill are moderating factors within this theory; for instance, employees with higher education tend to compare themselves to outsiders, whereas people of the same sex tend to compare themselves with each other (Lichtenberg et al., 2016). Under-rewarded perceptions can also provoke workers to act to address inequity, whereas over-rewarded employees tend to engage in cognitive dissonance—that is, they convince themselves equity exists within the workplace (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016). Under-rewarded employees attempt to reduce inequity through changing their level of expended effort, requesting for a raise in pay, or even encouraging the reference person to expend more effort (Mekraz et al., 2016). Thus, this theory stresses the need for fair reward systems in organizations (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016).

The advantages of the use of equity theory in creating organizational policies include the ability of organizational leaders to determine the rewards necessary to increase employee motivation, the importance of understanding the differences between employees' inputs and outputs, and the role of fair treatment in motivating employees (Wang & Hou, 2019). Although reward systems are enough to elicit some employee satisfaction, there are many factors that may influence an employee's perception and influence their level of job satisfaction (Mekraz et al., 2016).

Alderfer's Theory of Needs

Alderfer (1969) developed a needs-based theory that supported in many ways the theory developed by Maslow, but Alderfer's theory consisted of three rather than five basic needs. Alderfer's three levels consisted of existence, relatedness, and growth needs, which he saw as being hierarchical, and thus, influenced by personal growth, extrinsic rewards, and intrinsic rewards (Mekraz et al., 2016). According to Alderfer, motivation comes from a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Additionally, Alderfer's theory of needs includes Maslow's self-actualization as well as esteem needs that rely on intrinsic rewards (Maslow, 1943). Both theories are similar because they are hierarchical, and individuals will concentrate on the achievement of the lowest level of needs that is not fully satisfied (Heckmann et al., 2016). However, whereas Maslow contended the lowest level of needs should be satisfied before an individual can proceed to the next higher level, Alderfer theorized if a higher level need is unsatisfied, the individual will regress to a desire to satisfy lower-level needs (King et al., 2017). Additionally, Maslow believed once a need is met, it is no longer motivational, whereas Alderfer theorized that although an individual may have met a higher-level need in one's personal life, he or she may still be operating much lower on the scale where skills, aptitude, and knowledge may affect performance and confidence (Matthews et al., 2018). Given the similarities between Alderfer's theory of needs and Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, meeting the needs of employees is likely to be essential for increasing job performance. However, Alderfer's theory of needs was not selected as the primary framework for this study as the purpose of this study is not to understand how personal growth, intrinsic rewards, and extrinsic rewards motivate hospitality employees.

Link to Self-Determination Theory

The literature review showed there is a clear relationship between McClelland's need for achievement theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, Herzberg's two factor theory of motivation, and self-determination theory. The relationship that exists between motivators and higher-level needs indicates there is a related similarity between hygiene and lower-order needs (Hur, 2018). To explain further, the satisfaction of lower-order needs should occur before any higher-order needs can come into play as a motivational force, and Herzberg's matching hygiene aspects need to be met to prevent work dissatisfaction (Hur, 2018). In this manner, Maslow's higher-order needs help motivate individuals and are intrinsic in nature, ultimately aligning to Herzberg's motivational elements, which are also fundamentally intrinsic.

To tie these theories to self-determination theory, researchers have long desired to understand motivation in humans. Before the development of self-determination theory, theories attempting to evaluate motivation levels, such as expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964), focused on whether a person believed their efforts would result in the attainment of goals or outcomes with a specified value (Deci & Ryan, 2014). Self-determination theory is a needs-based motivation theory linked to multiple needs theories. Behavioral-based theorists argued a big reward as an incentive to increase motivation but undermining the participant's feelings of autonomy decreased their motivation as they feel controlled (Deci & Ryan, 2014).

Self-Determination Theory

Both Maslow's and Herzberg's theories coincide with self-determination theory as they rely on the realization of primary needs to move to a more productive state (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The focus of Maslow's theory, as well as Alderfer's theory, is on satisfying physiological and psychological needs, whereas the focus of Herzberg's is on hygiene and motivation factors. However, the focus of self-determination theory is on three different needs that together determine a person's level of motivation, these needs are feelings of autonomy, competency, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Many theories regarding motivation focus on both the achievement and pursuit of goals. Unfortunately, these goal-based motivation theories suffer from a deficiency; the proponents of the theories proposed when the potential value of two goals was equal, a person would pursue each goal with equal effort (Deci & Ryan, 2008). However, this may not always be the case. As researchers began to look at how humans evaluate and pursue goals, their research results confirmed people pursue goals based on the type of goal, rather than the expected value of the goal (Deci & Ryan, 2014). The results of Deci and Ryan's research of 2014 provide evidence to indicate a person is not indifferent, as previous theories suggested, about which goal they should accomplish. Instead, the research results suggest individuals focus on satisfying their own needs, rather than the accomplishment of a goal alone. To some extent researchers move significantly away from goals-based motivation theories toward needs-based motivation theories. In effect, this shift meant researchers had to determine how people value goals (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Self-determination theory took a different approach to determine how people value goals related to motivation. Rather than assuming motivation is related to the expected value for each outcome, self-determination theorists state that humans pursue goals based on psychological needs and their environment (Lichtenberg et al., 2016).

In self- determination theory, a primary focus is not the expected value of goal attainment, but the extent to which a person can fulfill their basic psychological needs as they work toward attaining outcomes they value as an individual (Deci & Ryan, 2008). A person may not pursue a goal that has a higher value if the goal fails to meet that person's basic growth needs. Similarly, an individual may pursue a goal that has a lower value if this goal meets their psychological growth needs (Lichtenberg et al., 2016). As a result, self-determination theory provided researchers with a differentiated framework for evaluating motivation than other theories, such as Maslow's, which stated there is a defined progression requirement to meet goals. Under Maslow's theory, for example, one would not pursue psychological goals unless the satisfaction of all physiological goals had occurred. Proponents of this theory assumed physiological goals were higher value goals to the individual.

In contrast, Deci et al. (2017) stated under self-determination theory, a person would pursue goals based upon their own perspectives about the goal, including how well that goal fulfilled psychological needs. This view is consistent with the behavioral economics concept of "satisficing" (Simon, 1956), a portmanteau of "satisfaction" and "sacrificing" that describes people giving up something they want or something they desire to help other people in an attempt to maximize their satisfaction and instead pursue alternatively a path the results lead to the well-being of other people.

Inherent needs and Motivation

The idea humans have an inherent need for, and thus continually move toward, psychological growth is a central principle of self- determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Accordingly, humans have an instinctive desire to grow, to be a part of a team, and to create a more meaningful version of themselves. Self-determination theory does not focus on the origin of this motivation, rather, self-determination theorists assume motivation is an innate quality in humans (Deci & Ryan, 2014). In self-determination theory, the belief is this base level of desire to improve is present in all humans. Another tenet of self-determination theory is that while there is a base level of desire to improve, a person's environment affects the desire to improve beyond this base level.

The focus of self-determination theory is on the factors that create and foster higher motivation levels, and inversely, the lower levels of motivation when those factors are not present. Therefore, according to self-determination theorists, motivation is specific to the individual and is based on their perceptions concerning their specific environment. These perceptions are subject to his or her judgments of what is valuable (Deci & Ryan, 2000). When an individual is looking toward the attainment of specific goals, such as organizational goals, their motivation will exist in varying degrees along the motivation continuum (Deci et al., 2017; Van den Broeck et al., 2016). Where an individual is operating on the continuum is based on his or her perceptions about the environment of the organization, including that person's feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

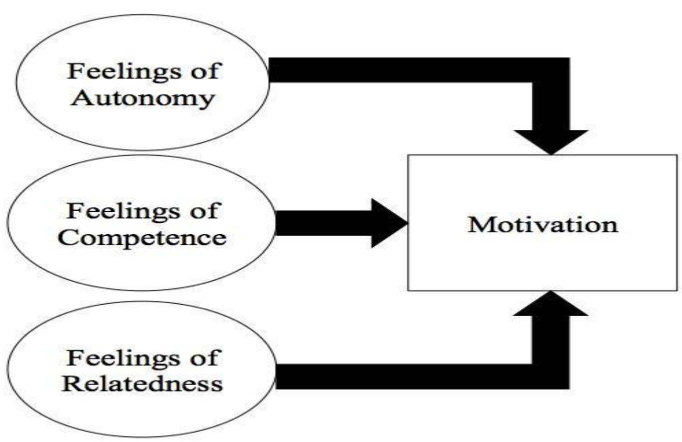
The Self-Determination Motivation Continuum. The tenets of self-determination theory address fundamental human issues including individual needs, life goals and aspirations, as well as the impact of a social environments on a person's motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Van den Broeck et al., 2016). According to proponents of self-determination theory, the factors that influence a person's level of motivation are their feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In addition to each of these components influencing a person's motivation, their environment is also critical to driving their motivation. According to Howard et al., (2017), self-determination theory focuses on a person's level of motivation as a reflective of the level of satisfaction related to their needs.

The existence of a motivation continuum is a fundamental assumption of self-determination theory. Due to the considerable use of self-determination theory in recent scholarly research, the assumption of the existence of a motivation continuum has come under scrutiny (Deci et al., 2017; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Van den Broeck et al., 2016). Because the motivation continuum is foundational to self-determination theory, Howard et al. (2017) conducted a meta-analysis study to provide scientific backing and validate the concept of a motivation continuum. In their study, Howard et al. (2017) collected data from 486 samples involving over 205,000 participants and using 13 validated motivation scales to determine if a continuum- like structure was present in the field of motivation. The researchers concluded from the meta-analysis that a continuum structure involving motivation exists, and further indicates self-determination explains human motivation. The researcher through his or her work indicates perceptions of the environment lead to motivation; and an individual's feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are critically related to their motivation, which means that a person's environment has a substantial influence on their motivation level.

Deci and Ryan (2000) clustered these environmental factors into three broad categories that described how an individual perceives feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness and Figure 1 graphically represents how these factors influence motivation. Further, theorists posited intrinsic motivation emerges when individuals fulfill their fundamental psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In self-determination theory, the feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness combine to determine where on the continuum an individual's motivation exists, therefore it is essential to fully address an individual's feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Figure 1

Three Factors Influencing Motivation in Self-Determination Theory



Adapted from Deci and Ryan (2000).

The self-determination theory may be used to guide and in addition provides an explanation for the McClelland needs theory which represents the primary conceptual framework as the needs of both theories are better aligned in substance. For instance, the need of relatedness found in the self-determination theory seems to be very similar as the need for affiliation as it pertains to the McClelland needs theory. Additionally, the need for power and the need for achievement are equally and respectfully close in meaning to the need of autonomy and the need for competence.

McClelland, Self-Determination, and Hospitality

McClelland's needs theory is most applicable to this study based on the three types of employee needs McClelland identified as key to ensuring job satisfaction. Whereas Maslow's five-stage hierarchy of needs theory (Rybnicek et al., 2019), Herzberg's (1966) hygiene and motivation factors study the relationship between internal needs and the resulting effort expended to fulfill them, Vroom's expectancy theory splits effort, performance, and results (Mekraz et al., 2016), McClelland's needs theory and its link to self-determination are better suited for use in this study as the needs for relatedness, autonomy, and competence may further explain the needs for achievement, power, and affiliation. In addition, the tenets of equity theory include the ability of organizational leaders to determine the rewards necessary to increase employee motivation, the importance of understanding the differences between employees' inputs and outputs, and the role of fair treatment in motivating employees (Wang & Hou, 2019) as well as Alderfer's theory of needs (1969) relating to existence, relatedness, and growth needs hold value and overlap with the other similar theories discussed so far all contain elements applicable to increasing job satisfaction in the hospitality industry, McClelland's needs theory was considered the most appropriate as the conceptual framework for this study, and even more so when accompanied by self-determination theory.

According to both McClelland and self-determination theory, the need for achievement is defined by the urge to attain success as well as excel; power describes the aspiration to influence or impact on the conduct of other persons, to be powerful and in control; and affiliation describes the desire for interpersonal relationships as well as understanding and cooperation with peers (Rybnicek et al., 2019). McClelland stated workers have a variety of needs that employers should meet to create job satisfaction and retain employees in their workforce (Moorer, 2014).

The tenets of self-determination theory address fundamental human issues including individual needs, life goals and aspirations, as well as the impact of a social environments on a person's motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Van den Broeck et al., 2016). Proponents of self-determination theory assert factors influencing a person's level of motivation are their feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. McClelland's needs theory and the need for achievement, which reflects a worker's desire for accomplishments, such as mastering skills through training, control, or high standards (Wakabi, 2016) are also present in self-determination theory.

Organizational Culture

The effort expended by the employee is a dimension of performance, which includes functions such as the execution of defined duties, team input, meeting deadlines, and the achievement of departmental goals, and the level of effort is often influenced by organizational culture (Hechavarría, 2016). Performance effectiveness then arises from the aspirations and human values that are influenced by organizational culture (Marshall et al., 2015). According to Rogala et al. (2017), managing organizational culture is important for managing organizational change (Khurana & Joshi, 2017).

Organizational culture as a concept has some degree of ambiguity. Some recent researchers see this concept as a combination of the practices and climate that organizations develop to manage personnel, or the climate that comes from the values and beliefs the manager of an organization holds (Ehrhart & Kuenzi, 2017). In this view, organizational culture is cultivated by the leadership of an organization, in which the leaders cannot control completely the organizational culture they created and nurtured and at the same time, organizational culture has a dimension that is invisible (Hechavarría, 2016). Although this dimension is below the surface, it can have a powerful influence (Ehrhart & Kuenzi, 2017). The driving forces of organizational culture constrain the groups' behavior, which manifests as shared norms (Ehrhart & Kuenzi, 2017). Visible levels or surface manifestations of organizational culture include observable symbols, slogans, behaviors, stories, dress, and settings (Dheer, 2017), whereas invisible levels of organizational culture include attitudes, beliefs, feelings, assumptions, underlying values, and attitudes (Dheer, 2017). Within organizations, motivational strategies often focus on the visible level of organizational culture (Hechavarría, 2016). However, it is important to also address the invisible level of an organizational culture as it can also impede or promote change. There can also be more than one organizational culture active within an organization (Mekraz et al., 2016).

There is a relationship between organizational culture and the leadership structures in the organization; thus, the management of organizational culture constitutes a very important leadership function because an organizational culture conveys a sense of identity through the practices, norms, and values (Khurana & Joshi, 2017). Organizational culture also defines what the organization excels at and includes the organization's past successes (Deery & Jago, 2015). Over time, an organization develops established norms that guide expected behavior patterns (Khurana & Joshi, 2017). According to Sauser and Sims (2018), a norm can be an established pattern of behavior that constitutes part of a culture. Such established norms may be formal or informal and help create acceptance for organizational behaviors considered normal within the organization (Sauser & Sims, 2018).

Kolb et al., (1995) proposed the dimensions of organizational culture as conformity, responsibility, standards, rewards, organizational clarity, warmth, support, and leadership. Conformity refers to the degree to which members feel constrained by rules and regulations, as well as policies and procedures, rather than working as they please (Kolb et al., 1995). Whereas responsibility refers to the giving of personal responsibilities to the employees so that they can participate in fulfilling the goals of the organization (Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016). Whereas standards refer to the emphasis placed on quality performance, as well as the degree to which communication occurs regarding goal commitments to employees (Radin Umar et al., 2018). Rewards refer to the extent to which employees feel recognized for good work, instead of receiving criticism, feeling ignored, or receiving punishment for mistakes (Epstein, 2018). Clear goals and good organization define organizational clarity, as opposed to chaos and confusion (Kolb et al., 1995). Both warmth and support refer to the attribute of friendliness within the organization, and the support derived from good relationships (Radin Umar et al., 2018). Lastly, leadership refers to the willingness of employees to accept direction and guidance from qualified leaders (Kolb et al., 1995).

Creating an organizational culture that embraces change is beneficial for addressing issues and needs within an organization. As such, the creation of a climate for change is imperative and begins with the leadership structures in the organization. To ensure a successful organizational culture, it is important to have effective leadership (Bowers et al., 2017). A critical dimension for the understanding of leadership and its practice is organizational culture (Bowers et al., 2017). Researchers have conceptualized organizational culture as bureaucratic, supportive, and innovative (Deery & Jago, 2015). The bureaucratic culture is compartmental, systemic, hierarchical, and has clear lines of authority and responsibility. Leaders within hierarchical cultures are good at controlling, coordinating, administrating, and maintaining efficiency. With regards to effects on employees, the bureaucratic culture may have a negative relationship with satisfaction, involvement, and employee commitment (Raina & Roebuck, 2016). Last, to ensure the organizational culture is productive, and employees are satisfied and have a willingness to change and encourage innovation among employees, and communication is key (By et al., 2015).

Leadership

Leaders also should be champions of an organizational culture management; they should promote the understanding of organizational culture (Khurana & Joshi, 2017). When leaders reward organizational sub-culture sets that embody the values, beliefs, and underlying assumptions of the organization’s leaders there is the promotion of the culture of the organization (Deci, 1972). Employee empowerment and engagement is helpful to assuring effective management of organizational culture. Such empowerment also promotes employee alignment to the overall culture of the organization (Raina & Roebuck, 2016). Team orientation is beneficial for dealing with existing barriers, and to promote and disseminate new cultural values and traits (Thompson, 2018). Tracking organization cultural change allows the assessment of cultural alignment, making sure subgroup practices and issues do not undermine the cultural ethos and underlying assumptions of the organization (Thompson, 2018).

Leader Qualities

According to By et al., (2015), in creating a trusting work environment, mindfulness includes being cognizant of present realities, living in the moment, and being sensitive to the feelings of other people (King & Haar, 2017). Mindfulness plays an important role in creating a positive and trusting work environment. In effective leadership, the goal was to support other people by meeting the needs, interests, and ambitions of other people, before considering one’s own wants and needs (Zentner, 2016). Similarly, King and Haar (2017) condoned mindfulness in the workplace by considering the wants and needs of other people. Effective leadership implies the effective execution and management of an organization's strategy. At the same time, organizations derive success based on how well the mission, vision, and strategic statements define the strategy, as well as the management of each (Deery & Jago, 2015). The quality of leadership determines the level of effort expended by employees, and how well the organization meets organizational goals. Therefore, good leadership should be able to motivate and inspire employees to work more efficiently (Deery & Jago, 2015).

Yahaya and Ebrahim (2016), and Dong et al., (2017), suggested leaders who motivate and encourage their employees increase organizational commitment by displaying trust and promoting teamwork. Successful leaders will also be personally involved with their employees and will lead by example by doing the work themselves (Dong et al., 2017). Frequently, this will inspire employees to work for the highest standards (Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016).

Good leadership communication means creating policy initiatives and guiding any changes to promote an environment where employees are satisfied and who wish do not seem to have a reason to be connected directly to the organizations (By et al., 2015). Leaders should be able to inspire and retain their employees through communication and behavior. Inspiring employees is a central way to motivate others, as opposed to inspiring fear of punishment. A dynamic and creative leader should also be committed to being flexible (Van Dun et al., 2016).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership may require managers to build organizational trust; therefore, leaders should have good faith in their organization to positively affect their employees through modeling transformational leadership (Nasra & Heilbrunn, 2016). This discussion is very important for the study, as it provides insight into some of the cultural dimensions within public sector organizations that may promote employee effort. An effective leader would be able to stimulate such mutually shared processes and leverage it towards organizational goals. Burns (1978) first discussed the transformational leadership approach in 1978 when he studied political leaders. Within the context of the study, the concept of work motivation is particularly important since transformational leadership is known to be associated with higher levels of motivation for employees (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Bass and Avolio, (1994) described transformational leadership as a leadership approach for creating a positive work environment and for facilitating change. According to Burns (1978), transformational leadership occurs when followers and leaders are engaged in raising morale and motivation in the workplace. Bass (1985) extended the discussion of transformational leadership from the works of Burns (Burns, 1978) and noted transformational leadership is about how the leader motivates and encourages the followers to perform with integrity and at a higher level of performance. Bass (1985) also claimed three ways leaders transform their followers are by increasing the awareness of the importance and valuable of a task, getting employees and colleagues to focus primarily on the team or organization rather than on themselves, and finally acknowledging a higher order and intention.

According to Nohe and Hertel (2017), transformational leadership is a leadership style that stimulates, inspires, and transforms an organizational environment to achieve extraordinary results. Transformational leadership affects the basic attitudes and expectations of an organization by creating a common approach to achieve the company's goals. Nohe and Hertel stated transformational leadership is a full-range leadership model which explores leaders' practices, which influences workplace diversity, organizational culture, leadership, job satisfaction, education, and training. Transformational leaders rely on workers being intrinsically stimulated to achieve hard work, however, the existence of employees' intrinsic motivation implies employees hear, feel and connect with the leader's vision, therefore transformational leaders lose power in case employees disagree with the leaders (Nohe & Hertel, 2017). Transformational leaders motivate, encourage, and inspire employees to bring about change in an organization (Top et al., 2015). Transformational leaders can change an organization by motivating, encouraging, and inspiring employees (Northouse, 2018). Yahaya and Ebrahim (2016) found a relationship between the effect of transformational leadership and employee work engagement. Transformational leaders encourage employees to achieve organizational goals and maximize employee productivity (Gilbert et al., 2016). Gilbert et al. (2016) also found transformational leaders possessed and exemplified the characteristics of charisma and influence, which motivated employees to do more than expected. Northouse stated intellectual stimulation takes place under transformational leadership; and when individuals in a team work closely together and share information, the results are more significant than when working individually (Dong et al., 2017).

Ultimately, they found using a transformational leadership style of management reduced loss (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017).

Transformational Leaders

Regarding a leader's personality, Deinert et al., (2015) explored the connectivity of the elements of transformational leadership to a leader's personality, performance, and ability to engage and retain employees. To improve the understanding of the transformational leadership model, the authors argued different personality trait permutations can lead to different leadership behaviors. Deinert et al. emphasized the importance of exploring the projection of certain behaviors and outputs as the longevity of an organization rests upon solid and open-minded leadership. If the leaders demonstrate a transformational leader attitude, it increases employee job satisfaction, thus reducing employee loss (Gilbert et al., 2016). Transformational leaders can change an organization by motivating, encouraging, and inspiring employees (Northouse, 2018). Researchers have discovered employees tend to respect and follow transformational leaders given their dynamic value systems, and in turn, transformational leaders are generally open-minded, tolerant, and innovative (Khurana & Joshi, 2017; Nohe & Hertel, 2017). Transformational leadership easily inspires trust in employees, encouraging them to see workplace achievements as routes to reach greater personal and organizational goals (Solares Menegazzo et al., 2015). Transformational leaders encourage motivation, creativity, inspiration, and innovation in their employees as some employees in the workplace feel the presence of transformational leaders as a constant pressure.

Transformational leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to employees and their approach relates to higher returns and increased satisfaction (Solares Menegazzo et al., 2015).

Gilbert et al. (2016) noted four different types of stimulation/motivation: charisma, individual consideration, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation, which allows employees to benefit from thinking creatively. The first characteristic, inspirational leadership, could potentially relates most to this study and is the process in which a leader demonstrates functioning at a high level of optimism and vision; and therefore, plays a role in retaining employees. Inspirational leadership is extremely useful, as employees tend to respect inspirational leaders (Gilding et al., 2015). Inspirational leadership is different from other leadership styles as leaders present a sense of achievement to their followers (Gilding et al., 2015).

Inspirational Leadership. Inspirational leadership is a trademark of most inspirational or transformational leaders (McKibben et al., 2017). According to Gilding et al. (2015), inspirational skills include having the knowledge, talent, ability to motivate, and energy to motivate individuals or groups through speech, action, or conduct that propels individuals to pursue a compelling vision of a defined future. Inspirational leadership and transformational leadership are related. The presence of one always signifies the availability of the other in the same individual as the basis of both are trustworthiness, a passion for teams, the promotion of active listening, and expression of positive communication to teams based on obtaining a clear objective (Stahl, 1983).

Inspirational leadership skills develop and thrive through the conscious effort of managers who build trust in teams, in which leaders adopt inclusion and training as a standard practice, and where leaders align people to the vision, mission, and value of their organizations (Higgs & Dulewick, 2016). Inspiring leaders thrive because they facilitate change, they empower employees' growth, delegate to enhance their follower's potential, and they adopt leadership training strategies with their subordinates (Consiglio et al., 2016).

Inspirational leaders also foster group cohesion and encourage shared purpose and engagement through their ability to communicate and energize their employees and teach collaboration (Consiglio et al., 2016). Inspiring leaders generate enthusiasm, excitement, and obtain a commitment from their employees by translating the vision, mission, and values of the organization into terms relevant to the work employees perform (Higgs & Dulewick, 2016). Inspirational leaders are committed to continued success and transformation; they lead other people by example toward leadership strategies that culminate in reaching their desired destinations, they encourage and foster innovation in their organizations, and work towards reducing resistance to organizational processes and fostering satisfaction and retention (Deery & Jago, 2015).

Transformational Leadership, Satisfaction, and Retention

According to Hanaysha and Tahir (2016), increasing job satisfaction leads to a positive attitude among employees, thereby increasing work performance and retention. Similarly, in a study by Kennedy et al., (2015) quality-of-life and the intention to remain with an organization was based on employees being intrinsically motivated through resources such as growth opportunities and a healthy and caring work life environment. Based on research, these factors promote a sense of obligation, which ultimately influences the intention to stay or leave while working in an organization using the transformational leadership model, further supporting the choice of the conceptual framework.

To foster employee well-being and organizational effectiveness, there is a rationale to consider the components of job characteristics influenced by leadership needs as well as the employees' needs for autonomy and creativity in their jobs (Mikkelsen et al., 2017). The importance of considering the needs of both organizational leaders and their employees does not apply to only large businesses but is an optional organizational component in ensuring organizational effectiveness among all types and sizes of businesses. When leaders are satisfied with their jobs, employees also tend to be satisfied with their positions, and begin to gain organizational trust, the foundation of transformational leadership (Nasra & Heilbrunn, 2016). In another study, Kim et al. (2016) explored the relationship between transformational leadership, employee trust in their leaders, and job satisfaction, and found employees who trusted their leaders were much more satisfied in their positions (Kim et al., 2016). In support of this, McPhail et al. (2015) noted job satisfaction increases an employee's intentions to stay with a company, often fostered by dynamic leadership.

Exploring both transformational and inspirational leadership, Epstein (2018) examined these concepts in relation to the way a leader demonstrates sensitivity toward employees. In this case, the leader supports an employee's beliefs, engenders trust through self-sacrifice, which motivates and stimulates employee loyalty. The ability of an organization's leaders to function in a transformational leadership capacity will garner not only organizational performance, but also employee satisfaction.

According to Raes and De Jong (2015), whose primary study addressed the role transformational leadership has in ensuring employee satisfaction and empowerment, senior managers assessed in their study showed positive support for transformational leadership. This correlates with the work of Qu et al., (2015) who found an increase in organizational trust and employee satisfaction in organizations in which the leaders perceive themselves as transformational. In a correlational study conducted by Ocen et al. (2017), the authors examined whether a relationship existed between employees and satisfaction with their work. Out of the employees used in this study, Ocen et al. found a statistically significant relationship between transformational leadership approaches and the employees' satisfaction with their jobs.

An effective leader would be able to stimulate such mutually shared processes and leverage it toward organizational goals. Nohe and Hertel (2017) stated transformational leadership is a full-range leadership model which explores leaders' practices, and these practices influence workplace diversity, organizational culture, leadership, job satisfaction, education, and training. Transformational leaders can change an organization by motivating, encouraging, and inspiring employees (Northouse, 2018). Transformational leaders inspire leadership, creativity, and innovation in their employees. Transformational leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to employees and their approach relates to higher returns and increased satisfaction (Solares Menegazzo et al., 2015). When management utilizes transformational leadership, employees are more likely to be satisfied with their job. If the leaders demonstrate a transformational leader attitude, it may increases employee job satisfaction, thus reducing employee loss, however studying strategies researchers attempt to look at the research question in a holistic approach with the high probability of resolving the research question objectives (Nohe & Hertel, 2017).

In the Context of Hospitality

Mikkelsen et al., (2017) explored the literature on transformational leadership, loss, and retention at length. Their study supported the findings that transformational leadership approaches hold relevance within the organizational context. They found a transformational leader's role in facilitating and instilling positive relationships and behaviors within the hospitality organization leads to reduced employee loss (Mikkelsen et al., 2017). The results of the research provided further significant evidence supporting relevance of transformational leadership in organizational context relating to retention.

The findings regarding the effectiveness of transformational leadership support the benefits of this leadership style for increasing employee satisfaction. For example, Van Dierendonck et al., (2014) assessed transformational leadership through a study in which they compared various leadership styles. The results of their research revealed that although other forms of leadership, such as transactional, are effective within the hospitality industry; transformational leadership, which primarily operates through satisfying the needs of followers, is a more effective form of leadership for increasing employee satisfaction. According to Van Dierendonck et al., employees who are satisfied with their jobs in the hospitality field are more likely to stay in their current positions.

The degree to which employees perceive leaders in hospitality as transformational leaders, correspond to the degree of fulfillment experienced by the employees and further supports transformational leadership as a positive management method within the hospitality industry (McPhail et al., 2015). These findings supported the work of Buil et al. (2019), who also assessed employee satisfaction and well-being related to positive results in a transformational leadership hospitality environment. When employees find satisfaction in their job, they are far more likely to remain with the organization for long-term employment, but leadership styles are not considered as a part of my proposed research as my intention was to focus on strategy instead (Buil et al., 2019).

Training

The implementation of employee training programs occurs in all industries. According to Hanaysha (2016), organizations use training to enhance the skills of their employees, thereby improving job performance. Additionally, Esteban-Lloret et al., (2018) stated adequately trained employees significantly influence organizational performance in a positive manner and leave employees feeling more satisfied and willing to remain with the organization. Esteban-Lloret et al. further posited the motivating factors behind employee training are based in the desire for the organization’s leaders to align with societal norms and values as well as increasing organizational improvement and subsequent growth. Therefore, a likely goal of any organization's leader is to ensure appropriate training practices.

Employees are an essential resource of any organization. As such, it is understandable why there are a sufficient research studies about employee training related to human resource practices (Esteban-Lloret et al., 2018). Not only does adequate training result in benefits for the organization, but also for the employees. Jaworski et al., (2018) conducted a study regarding the impact of training on the job satisfaction of part-time hospitality employees and found that satisfaction with job training impacted employee satisfaction.

George (2015) stated retaining employees, particularly professional workers, is critical to any organization. George posited maintaining the quality professional talents is crucial to organizations because it eliminates the recruiting, selection, and onboarding costs of new employees, thus maintaining continuity in the expertise of existing employees and supporting a rewarding organizational culture. George proposed the retirement of the baby boomers means there should be a greater emphasis on retaining key employees in organizations to mitigate the loss of critical skills and competencies. For institutions to remain competitive, they should have highly skilled workers (George, 2015).

The focus of individual consideration leadership, akin to transformational and inspirational leadership, relates to skillfully training employees and personally developing the individual (Deinert et al., 2015). Managers frequently boost employee development by utilizing individual consideration, remaining cognizant of individual styles and preferences (Khurana & Joshi, 2017). From an organizational perspective, when managers fail to create training geared toward increasing satisfaction and reducing turnover, it affects the overall organization, which creates the turnover, costs the organization money, and affects client relationships (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013).

Training and Satisfaction

Although industry training programs may vary, the goal of training employees include both serving customers and creating job satisfaction in the employees. According to Jaworski et al. (2018) both on-the-job training and job shadowing influenced the employees’ level of satisfaction with their overall training. Additionally, Jaworski et al. determined the length of training did not influence the employees’ level of satisfaction regarding their training, but rather it was the quality that drove satisfaction. The results of Jaworski et al.’s study support the idea of the importance of adequate employee training to elicit employee job satisfaction. In a similar study, Hanaysha stated (2016) competition between organizations within markets has increased the focus on employee satisfaction whether an organization’ leader wants to remain lucrative or not. The research of Esteban-Lloret et al. (2018) supported this assertion and indicated the importance of proper employee training to secure a competitive advantage within markets and to improve employee satisfaction.

Hanaysha’s (2016) study also addressed the effects of empowerment, teamwork, and training on employee commitment to an organization in Malaysian public universities. Hanaysha hypothesized employee training would positively influence organizational commitment, which the results of the study supported. Although Hanaysha's study occurred in the higher education industry, rather than the hospitality, the results of the study might be applicable to both. For example, Hanaysha asserted higher education organizations use training to enhance the skills and knowledge of their employees, which then increases efficiency and satisfaction. The studies discussed here relate to the present study as the goal was to explore strategies hospitality small business leaders use to implement effective training programs leading to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention.

Training and Retention

Based on the research, training, retention, and turnover have a direct impact on the profitability of the organization and the tendency for encouraging a positive work environment. Gilbert et al. (2016) stated when organizations train their employees, they invest in the future of their employees and the organization. The workforce in the hospitality industry changes frequently, and it is becoming more difficult to retain employees. Therefore, it is important for leaders to create workable strategies to train employees. Cloutier et al. (2015) determined organizational leaders could increase employee retention by encouraging the use of effective communication, hiring a diverse workforce, selecting the appropriate candidates based on skill level and organizational fit, and by offering employee development and training programs. Whereas some type of training for employees such as on-the-job training or classroom training is crucial for just about any organization, as employers should examine the potential downside that training employees can have on a business, bottom line, and existing manpower (Gilbert et al., 2016). Considering training as a strategy to increase employee job satisfaction and retention may result in an increased of staff training cost negatively affecting the organization bottom line. According to the State of Industry Report (2014), organizations routinely spend on average of $1,208 per employee for training and the development of their skill.

Training in Hospitality

One of the ways to increase effectiveness and retain small businesses in the hospitality industry is through training. Training is crucial in many industries, including hospitality, as there are often high costs associated with frequent employee turnover (Jaworski et al., 2018). Hanaysha (2016) asserted one of the most important components of an organization's effectiveness is eliciting organizational commitment from the employees. Hanaysha's assertion is applicable to the hospitality industry as the more advanced the skills and knowledge of hospitality employees, the more efficiently they will be able to perform their job functions. Hanaysha's findings are supported by Jaworski et al.'s findings regarding the impact satisfactory training impacted employee commitment to their job. As such, an employee committed to their job is likely to have increased retention rates.

The results of these studies relate to the current study as the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies hospitality small business leaders use to implement effective training programs leading to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention. One method an organizational leader may use to increase retention is ensuring their employees have adequate training, which may increase their job satisfaction. In the hospitality industry, employee turnover is associated with high costs related to replacing the employees, lost revenue, and missed opportunity costs (Jaworski et al., 2018). Despite these problems, the hospitality industry has not expended much effort into developing and implementing the training programs necessary to reduce turnover (Jaworski et al., 2018). Although the research on the industry is still evolving, academics studying the problem of training programs in hospitality have made suggestions, but the industry has been reluctant to change (Tracey et al., 2015).

To ensure employees function efficiently and maintain commitment to the organization they should have the tools to do so. Having the needed tools to perform one's job aligns with the assertion of Jaworski et al. (2018) suggesting hospitality industry appropriate training results in consistent job performance and satisfaction as well as increases in guest satisfaction and reductions in organizational costs. Huang and Su (2016) surveyed a sample of 115 participants to find the relationship between job training satisfaction, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. Huang and Su found a negative relationship between job training satisfaction and turnover intentions. Huang and Su's found a negative relationship between job training satisfaction and turnover intentions; and employees were less likely to leave the organization when skills-based training was used intending to prepare employees for advancement and to perform the tasks they were hired to perform. Additionally, Huang and Su argued it is critical for management to consider employees' satisfaction with the training and the training approach. The main purpose of their study was to ascertain the reasons for employee loss in hospitality organizations (Al Mamun & Hasan, 2017).

Dhar (2015) examined a sample of 494 employees working in small and medium-sized tourist hotels operating in Uttarakhand, India and found a healthy relationship between training, the quality of service, and employee retention. Dhar revealed the quality of service improved in the organization with adequately trained employees because employees were more committed to the organization. Additionally, Santhanam et al. (2017) explored the relationship between human resource management practices, breach of psychological contract, and employee turnover intentions among hotel frontline employees in the Indian hospitality industry. Santhanam et al. (2017) collected responses from 294 frontline employees (front office, food, and beverage services). Santhanam et al. found selection, training, and compensation practices influence the employee’s turnover intentions.

Using McClelland’s needs theory (McClelland et al., 1980) and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), it is possible to assess which different needs, when met, can create a more effective training program in hospitality. Deci and Ryan (2000) identified the three needs best suited to affecting employee levels of performance, motivation, and satisfaction. The three needs most critical are feelings of autonomy, competency, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Training programs that take these needs into account are likely to result in more content employees, who will be more likely to stay with an organization for longer. Such programs will also fulfill the part of the brain that desires to learn, and to achieve a result, or *satisfy a motive* (McClelland et al., 1980).

Training for Satisfaction

Training employees, when done well, can influence their level of satisfaction. One aspect of training that can affect employee satisfaction includes scheduling flexibility. In the context of a modern society, many people in the workforce have additional responsibilities outside of their jobs, such as childcare (Chen, 2017). Allowing employees to have flexible schedules is a significant factor in predicting employee satisfaction (Chen, 2017). In a training context, employees who are allowed to create flexible training schedules are more likely to find themselves committed to their workplace early on; they see their well-being as an organizational priority, and see the values of the organization being demonstrated (Chen, 2017).

A positive training experience is a solidifying factor in a new employee's satisfaction with their position and willingness to remain with the organization (Jaworski et al., 2018). Although the process of developing and implementing a training program can be costly and time-consuming, well-trained employees leave less frequently and are less stressed (Jaworski et al., 2018). Ongoing training throughout an employee's career also improves outcomes. Additionally, when organization leaders distribute a training budget fairly between new and existing employees, employees experience satisfaction and improved work commitment (Jaworski et al., 2018).

The results of several studies revealed how a positive relationship between management and the employees leads to job satisfaction, greater loyalty, a higher level of productivity and service quality, and a higher retention rate of skilled professionals (Buil et al., 2019). Al Mamun and Hasan (2017) discussed how employee retention can lead to enhanced organizational productivity and effectiveness. George (2015) argued retention factors occur on two levels, the organizational and on the job. Many employees dissatisfied with their job may have loyalty to the organization. Thus, according to George organizational leadership plays critical roles in employee satisfaction and retention to adequately address organizational and personal goals.

As posited by Ahmad et al., (2015), the focus on quality of work life among employees warranted further exploration. Dartey-Baah (2015) tested a theoretical model to understand the relationship between employees' quality of work life and their willingness to leave the work environment. In conducting a study based on a sample of employees using a questionnaire, the author concluded the most significant predictor of quality of work life was the support of management. Dartey-Baah's study validates the tenets of transformational leadership in that when employees feel valued, they will be less willing to leave an organization. Ehrhart and Kuenzi, (2017) supported these findings and noted the use of several feasible approaches, which leaders can apply to ensure their employees continue in their respective organizations, thereby enhancing organizational effectiveness, productivity, satisfaction, and retention in a hospitality setting.

Given the focus of this study was to develop strategies hospitality small business leaders can use to implement effective training programs, it may be important to understand and use McClelland’s needs theory and the self-determination theory to evaluate and frame the strategies used when developing training programs. As such this conceptual framework may be applicable to analyzing the data from my study because every employee has needs and those needs can be addressed through effective training programs for increasing their job satisfaction and retaining them in the workforce.

Strategies for Selecting Different Types of Training Programs

There are many types of training programs, each of which works best in different contexts. Considering the specific needs of an organization when developing a training program can ensure that it is effective, and employees get the most out of the program as possible (Chen, 2017). Programs that focus on key competencies of the industry will provide the most opportunities for success, such as: analyzing and solving problems, communication, critical thinking, decision-making, digital competencies, information technology, personal skills, problem solving, team skills, and the use of numbers (Morozov & Morozova, 2019; Tracey et al., 2018; Zaitseva, Kozlov, Nikolskaya, 2017). Programs that are cognizant of and responsive to current industry trends and realities will also ensure employees are prepared for their jobs (Demirciftci et al., 2017). This can include training on the increasing amounts of technology that exist in the hospitality industry, and the digitalization of many processes and systems (Morozov & Morozova, 2019).

Training is often either one-on-one or in group settings (Jaworski et al., 2018). One-on-one methods include options like the buddy system, or an online training approach; group training can be role playing or demonstrating types of training (Jaworski et al., 2018). Although various styles of training can be effective when used correctly, implementation of each method is an important aspect to ensuring the training program is effective. In some cases, the buddy system resulted in a *sink-or-swim* style of training, which was ineffective (Jaworski et al., 2018).

The development of effective training programs that lead to higher employee retention and incorporate self-determination theory into training through effective leadership should include the treatment of part-time and full-time employees by management. Often, employers treat part-time employees differently than full-time employees because they perceive them to be substandard, or less committed (Jaworski et al., 2018). If management were to provide the same type of training, treatment, recognition, and benefits to all employees, they might decrease employee turnover (Jawoski et al., 2018).

Transition

Section 1 was an introduction to gaps in understanding surrounding the implementation of effective training programs in hospitality small businesses leading to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention. An overview of the existing and current theories extended an understanding of the topic. Exploring motivational theories in the workplace and the link to self-determination theory occurred in the context of this study. The following areas related to the study's problem statement contributed to this review: (a) motivational theories in the workplace, (b) McClelland and self-determination in hospitality (c) organizational culture and leadership, (d) transformational leadership, satisfaction, and retention, (e) training, and (f) training in hospitality. Hospitality organizations may use this exploration, and the strategies discussed in the review, to increase the probability of business success.

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies hospitality small businesses leaders use to implement effective training programs leading to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention. The target population for this study consisted of five hospitality small businesses leaders who oversee their companies' training programs located in Washington, DC and have successfully increased employee job satisfaction and retention. The implications for positive social change include the potential for increased employee job satisfaction and retention to increase customer satisfaction which creates growth for businesses by providing jobs and tax revenues for communities, thus possibly leading to the construction of new bridges, roads, schools, and highways. In Section 2, there is an explanation of the qualitative method used in this study. Section 2 also includes a presentation of the population, sampling, data collection, data analysis, and the reliability and validity of the study method.

Section 2: The Project

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies hospitality small business leaders use to implement effective training programs leading to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention. The target population for this study consisted of five hospitality small businesses leaders who oversee their companies' training programs located in the Washington, DC area and have successfully increased employee job satisfaction and retention. The implications for positive social change include the potential for increased employee job satisfaction and retention to increase customer satisfaction, which can create growth for businesses by providing jobs and tax revenues for communities, possibly leading to the construction of new bridges, roads, schools, and highways.

Role of the Researcher

For this qualitative multiple case study, I served as the primary research instrument. In qualitative research, the researcher serves as one data collection method, thereby becoming an instrument in the study (Wa-Mbaleka, 2019). Researchers have a variety of options when they choose to conduct a case study (Levitt et al., 2018). In this qualitative multiple case study, I collected data on the different strategies hospitality small businesses leaders use to implement effective training programs leading to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention. I conducted interviews to gain information on the design and implementation of employee training programs, asking open-ended questions (see Appendix) to gather information on the programs.

Researchers conducting interviews use an interview protocol to ensure the equivalency of interviews across participants (Fusch and Ness, 2015) and to elicit from participants all information pertinent to the study (Yin, 2018).

To ensure the protection of participants, I followed the ethical research rules outlined in the Belmont Report (see National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research [NCPHSBBR], 1979). The Belmont report includes guidelines regarding the protection of participants, recruitment procedures, privacy measures, assurance of participants rights, and the use of an informed consent process (NCPHSBBR, 1979). I assured participants that I would try to keep their information confidential and their participation was optional. The information included in the interviews and provided in addition to the interviews were included in this study only for research purposes.

In my analysis of the case studies for themes, I remained objective and actively work to minimize my own biases. Before conducting interviews with participants, I evaluated my personal feelings and beliefs regarding the business problem. Researchers who fail to address their biases risked skewing the data for their study (Sonuga, 2017). As I reviewed interview transcripts and documentation related to the interviews, I checked the accuracy of the data of the interviews with triangulation against information found in the companies' documents. Triangulation is a method to ensure the veracity of collected data (Denzin & Giardina, 2016). To validate my findings, I used member checking, which allows researchers to ensure their interpretation of the data aligns with the participants' intention (Birt et al., 2016). In addition, researchers must abide by a specific set of ethical principles and practices (Yin, 2018). I made every effort within my power to ensure my study was ethical.

Participants

For this study, I interviewed five small hospitality businesses leaders who oversee their companies' training programs located in Washington, DC. To participate in this study the business leader must have overseen their company's training programs located in the Washington, DC area and have successfully increased employee job satisfaction and retention. To collect the necessary information, I conducted open-ended interviews with qualified leaders who experienced designing and implementing training programs in the hospitality industry that improved employee satisfaction and retention. Open-ended interviews are a method that researchers can use to gather information on the strategies and experiences of interviewees (Yin, 2018).

Once Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the study (approval no. 07-24-20-0985049), I began to reach out to business leaders who fit my criteria to find participants. My own personal familiarity with the region and the hospitality industry allowed me to begin my search for qualified business leaders to interview or those who could assist me in finding participants. I selected participants using purposive sampling. For studies that require participants to have a specific knowledge base, purposive sampling is used to gather participants who have the requisite experience (DuBois et al., 2018). Using purposive sampling provides researchers with the opportunity to select individuals who fit the criteria and are knowledgeable on the topic of research (Yin, 2018). Once I selected potential participants, ensured they meet the eligibility criteria, and asked them if they would be willing to participate, I explained my research to them, so they could be well informed before deciding whether to participate. Once I informed participants, I asked them if I could interview them and have access to documentation of the results of their training programs and begin the scheduling process to find a time for the interviews of participants.

Research Method and Design

Research Method

I chose to use a qualitative method to conduct my research into the strategies hospitality small businesses leaders use to implement effective training programs leading to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention. Using a qualitative method allowed me to review not only available documentation on effective training programs but also gain insight from business leaders through interviews. Qualitative research and interviews provide the most effective foundation for describing and sharing results (Yin, 2018). More specifically, semistructured interviews give researchers access to the experiences of participants (Maramwidze-Merrison, 2016). My semistructured interviews provided me with information on the specific experiences of business leaders who have had success in designing and implementing effective training programs that have resulted in improved job satisfaction and employee retention. My interviews occurred in a flexible, iterative way, so participants remained comfortable and could share the information they wished; my questions were open-ended. My aim was to explore behaviors such as motivations, reasoning, and opinions (see Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). In addition, a qualitative method is subjective, meaning the researcher should interpret the information that participants provide and then analyze it (Olson et al., 2016).

The differences in qualitative and quantitative research methods include the strategies, procedures, and processes (Levitt et al., 2018). A quantitative method would not have met the needs of this study. Quantitative methods allow the researcher to gather information on the interactions between variables, to test hypotheses using the data and results of certain populations (Bahli & Rivard, 2017). In quantitative research, researchers ensure internal validity by using randomization, which did not fit the goals of this study (Runfola et al., 2017). Randomly grouping business leaders based on the outcomes of their training programs would not have best served this study. Rather, by using a multiple case study design, this study was able to gather the necessary information without randomization. In addition, using the mixed method study design did not serve the goals of this study. Mixed methodology requires the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods in the same study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Given that a quantitative methodology was not appropriate for this study, the use of the mixed methodology was also not appropriate. Qualitative research methodology better suits the needs of this topic and study.

Research Design

To find and analyze the similarities and differences in different approaches and cases, a multiple case study design was selected in place of an ethnographical, narrative, or phenomenological approach. In an ethnographic study, the researchers embed themselves into the actions, customs, and beliefs of a culture to better understand it

(Levitt et al., 2018). The aim of this study was not to better understand the decision-making or behaviors of a specific population, which made ethnography an inappropriate method. Using a narrative design, researchers share their research in story form (Levitt et al., 2018). The purpose of this study was not to understand the sharing of stories regarding the experiences of the participants; thus, a narrative design was not appropriate. Similarly, phenomenology allows researchers to explore the meaning of lived experiences of participants (Levitt et al., 2018). Yet the goal of this study was not to understand the personal impact of lived experiences.

A multiple case study design allows the comparison of different cases to find the similarities and differences across practices to see if there are trends, while keeping the research within boundaries of sector, location, and activity (Yin, 2018). A multiple case study was appropriate for the analysis of implementing effective employee training programs in small hospitality businesses in Washington DC. Using case studies allows for more detailed input into the research process, to better build a holistic understanding of the practices and topics while also allowing participants to provide their input during interviews (Yin, 2018). Including triangulation and data saturation practices also made a multiple case study approach suited to this study. Data saturation occurs when no new information is being gathered from participants. (Fusch et al., 2018). In my interview process, I asked participants to continue providing information until they thought they had provided all they wanted to share. To best meet the purpose of the study and explore the questions, a multiple case study design was appropriate.

Population and Sampling

To select participants for this multiple case study, I utilized purposive sampling. Purposive sampling allows researchers to select participants who have experience and expertise in the topic at hand (Fusch & Ness, 2017). Researchers commonly use this technique in qualitative studies, as it allows the alignment of the sample with the research question (Anderson, 2017). One potential concern in using purposive sampling is the lack of randomization and subsequent generalization of the data (Levitt et al., 2018). As generalizability to a broader population was not a primary goal of this study, purposive sampling was an acceptable method with which to find participants.

In my study, I used five business leaders working in hospitality small businesses who had successfully designed and implemented effective employee training programs that improved employee job satisfaction and retention. A study's validity can be based on the depth and quality of information provided by participants, rather than the number of participants (Yin, 2018). As a result, I chose to include five cases in my study. Additionally, it is important for researchers to not conclude their research or consider their data to be authentic until they have reached data saturation and interviewees have no additional feedback or input to provide (Fusch et al., 2018). My goal was to reach data saturation to ensure I had the greatest amount of information possible and if data saturation had not been achieved, I would have gathered additional information from participants.

To participate in this study the business leader needed to have substantial experience overseeing their company's training programs located in the Washington, DC area and have successfully increased employee job satisfaction and retention. To find participants, I emailed potential interviewees with an introductory email, asking whether they felt they met my study criteria. If they responded positively, I verified whether they were eligible, then shared more information on the study and its purpose. At that point, I asked them if I could interview them and have access to documentation of their results and begin the scheduling process to find a time for the participants and myself to conduct the interview. Interviews occurred in locations that were convenient for participants and comfortable for them; although all efforts were made to conduct a face-to-face interview, I reserved the right to choose a phone interview or other types of electronic communication such as email, Skype, Zoom. A face-to-face interview or video conferencing interview is appropriate for researchers to obtain detailed information about the research question (see Appendix).

I considered the assumptions I had going into the interview and reflected how these assumptions could impact the interview. As a researcher I positioned myself in comparison to the expert participant or the business leader through deep and active listening considering the interview questions and follow-up questions in order to align and analyze the data of the interview against the information found in the literature and the companies' documents of the businesses leaders.

Ethical Research

To ensure my research followed ethical guidelines, I submitted my study to the Walden University IRB and gained approval to gather data. Concerning participants, my aim in this research was to respect their rights, protect their interests and well-being, protect their privacy and information. I respected their rights by following the guidelines established in the Belmont Report (NCPHSBBR, 1979) and through adherence to an interview protocol. Similarly, I followed the plan laid out for participants recruitment and informed consent by adhering to established processes, procedures, and protocols. Participants had the opportunity to review and sign informed consent forms (Flory & Emanuel, 2004). In conjunction with my own ethical actions, I helped protect the rights of the participants. I tried my best to keep the identities of the participants and their organizations confidential, along with all other information collected, to ensure the protection of the participants' privacy. I assigned pseudonyms to each and excluded all identifying information from the study. The data collected as part of this research was kept in a secured file cabinet, access to which only I had. I am also following common practices of data storage by only keeping the information collected for 5 years, after which the information will be deleted and/or shredded.

Additionally, participants in qualitative studies should be able to leave a study, without penalty, at any time, or to decline answering interview questions (Yin, 2018). I informed participants of this right. Participants also had the option not to participate in any given interview session and may withdraw from study at any time by informing me they chose to withdraw. In addition, researchers should not share participant information with other participants, because the information will be used solely for research purposes, and to share that information could cause unnecessary discomfort or stress for participants (Yin, 2018). I ensured that participants knew the information was for research only. Additionally, participants understood that there were no financial gains or incentives for participation. Any non-monetary gain a participant could find due to their participation occurred outside of the realm of the study (Dubrin, 2015). Such non-momentary gains, such as personal satisfaction or sense of accomplishment, were not intentional as part of my research.

Data Collection Instruments

In qualitative research, there are several potential sources of data (Yin, 2018). The potential data sources are archival records, direct observation, documentation, interviews, participant observation, and physical artifacts (Yin, 2018). Researchers need not use all sources in any given study for it to have validity (Maramwidze-Merrison, 2016). In my research, I used participants interviews and documentation to gather data and results. I served as the primary data collection instrument and interviewed participants. For each interview, I had a set of written, open-ended questions for interviewees to answer in our one-on-one or virtual meetings (see Appendix B). These questions were semistructured, to allow for additional questions as necessary to obtain enough information for data saturation. Before each interview began, I shared with the participants the purpose and expectations of the study and reminded them of their right to decline answering a question or end the interview for any reason without penalty. I also shared that their answers would remain confidential, and that only I would have access to the data.

Prior to the interviews, I reviewed the interview instruments again to check for clarity of phrasing and a sufficient number of planned questions, and reviewed the amount of time scheduled, to ensure we would be able to complete the interview process completely, without rushing or inconveniencing the participants. Best practice in research dictates the researcher should review materials in advance, to limit or eliminate inconvenience to participants (Maramwidze-Merrison, 2016). Once the interview was underway, I asked the participants the pre-established interview questions, although I used follow-up questions and prompts to guide the participants into providing thorough and complete answers to the questions, in the interest of reaching data saturation. A detailed audit trail is one method to determine data reliability (Lachmann et al., 2017). I established a detailed audit trail by clarifying the methodological decision-making process. The audit trail consisted of using the interview questions to collect data from each participant, afterward I transcribed each participant interview and conduct member checking to clarify the statements of each participant. During the interview process, I helped participants feel at ease in sharing their stories by providing a safe and comfortable space and presence for them.

This study invited participants to be interviewed, then I conducted semistructured interviews using an onsite interviews or virtual setting interviews either by phone or through video conferencing with participants, at which time participants were asked to share further documentation such as training programs files, data of employee satisfaction and retention as it pertains to their processes and strategies through emails; this consisted of the data collection for this study. I collected and analyzed the information solely to understand and compare the experiences of the business leaders included in the study. I believe the singular use of the data improved the accuracy and validity of the collected data and the subsequent findings. The hope was this intentional design in the research process increased validity and decreased the inclusion of my own bias as a researcher. For instance, I checked and validated the study's design and results through member checking as I conducted interviews and analyzed the data. Consistent analysis of results via member checking improves validity (Yin, 2018).

Semistructured Interviews

I conducted my interviews in person or through a virtual setting because of the Coronavirus pandemic, because there are numerous demonstrated benefits to having a direct, in-person interview, as opposed to other methods. As a researcher, I was able to demonstrate my politeness and my ability to gain the trust of other people and understand nonverbal communication. Participants often benefit from researchers demonstrating politeness and feel more comfortable sharing the details of their experiences as a result (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In-person interviews result in better data, because interviews allow the researcher to better understand the participant and the portrayal of their experiences and emotions, which allows for more accurate representations of the sentiments in the later date (Maramwidze-Merrison, 2016). Other forms of data collection, or even other formats of interviews, may not have the same effect but I kept the option open of virtual interviews as the Coronavirus continues to spread in many communities around the world. In an interview, there are multiple ways to ask any given question or series of questions, such as prompting, which can result in the sharing of more detailed information and an improved understanding by the researcher of the participant’s experiences (Flory & Emanuel, 2004). My desire to collect thorough, detailed information and better understand the similarities and differences in the experiences of the participants led me to select a virtual or in-person, semistructured interview format using open-ended questions. Each interview took about 60 minutes, but the length of the interview varied, depending on how much detail the participant provided, or how much time a participant took answering a question.

Each interview took place in a location chosen by the business leader using an onsite or virtual setting at the time of scheduling. I ensured the chosen spaces were private enough for the business leaders to feel comfortable providing the information needed during an onside interview or a virtual interview. In a case of a virtual interview, I did my best to test the technologies in advance and during the interview, I tried my best to monitor the body language and make connections with the participants. To best capture the information during the interviews, I used an audio recorder for transcription only if I was given the permission by the participants and a journal to record notes and collect interview data and at the end of each interview I requested for the company’s documents. Additionally, I followed an interview protocol (see Appendix B) to ensure each interview proceeded in a similar manner to reduce bias. If, after the initial interviews, I did not reach data saturation, I interviewed the participants again until data saturation was complete. I conducted iterative interviews, asking follow-up questions to gather more data on answers given by participants. I knew that I reached data saturation when no new information emerged from participants responses. Yin (2018) recommends utilizing a flexible data plan. Reaching data saturation is one method to ensure the data collected, and subsequent analysis do not find opposing patterns (Fusch & Ness, 2017). I pursued data saturation and checked for it by way of, and assessment of the companies' documents and findings until no new themes emerged.

Data Organization Technique

Due to the large amounts of data collected, I separated different types of data, such as recordings, personal notes, and company documentation, to ensure clarity of information and prevent confusion. I housed transcriptions and audio recordings on my computer and in a backup drive, rather than in a cloud database. Furthermore, I locked all materials from the study, including the drive, transcripts, and consent forms signed by participants, in a secure file cabinet that only I was able to access. Following existing recommendations, I kept the data secured for five years, at which point, I deleted the information stored electronically and shredded paper files. Flory and Emanuel, (2004) and Yin (2018) both recommend a two-pronged data storage method, followed by deletion and shredding after a finite period.

Data Analysis

Once I completed the interviews, I reviewed the recordings carefully and transcribed each participant interview. Based on those transcripts, I began to perform open coding of the information myself, so I could begin to classify and identify the themes in the information I gathered. Researchers recommend open coding as a method that allows for an effective identification of themes and outstanding questions in a study

(Levitt et al., 2018). Ongoing data analysis is an inherent aspect in qualitative research, and coding should be continuous to ensure the identified themes are still relevant and to pinpoint when data saturation occurs (Anderson, 2017). I also assessed my found themes with the literature I reviewed and the conceptual framework I developed. In my analysis, I began with open coding using the following steps: review transcript data, establish classes of information that encapsulate the data, organize data. My coding took place manually as well as further data and theme analysis. When needed, I used NVivo 10 software for organizing information that I collected. When necessary, I also used the software to organize additional data. I will keep all electronic and paper forms of data for five years, at which point I will delete all electronic data and destroy any paper-based data.

Triangulation

Researchers may choose from four types of triangulation, methodological triangulation, data triangulation, investigator triangulation, or theory triangulation (Turner et al., 2017). Methodology triangulation is a method by which researchers combine multiple types of primary research, such as documents, interviews, questionnaires, or surveys to increase the amount of data they have, ensuring the findings have integrity (Turner et al., 2017). Data triangulation, on the other hand, provides a method by which researchers can compare data gathered in different settings or at different times. Data triangulation can combine primary and secondary research methods, like documents, interviews, observation, photographs, or public records, to compare varying perspectives and data points (Renz et al., 2018). Researchers utilize data triangulation to gather the most complete data they can (Turner et al., 2017). To better analyze my literature and connect it to my study findings, I used data triangulation. Throughout my research process, I continuously and thoroughly conducted data triangulation using my interviews, companies' documents, and existing research on employee training program efficacy and design. By combining my interview results, companies' documents and my literature review, I had the opportunity to develop a more thorough dataset, which helped me better understand the strategies of business leaders in hospitality small businesses in Washington, D.C.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability is often defined as demonstrating the scientific soundness of attained study results (Spiers et al., 2018). If a researcher has truthfully represented the data, and understands it well, they could achieve both reliability and validity (Lachmann et al., 2017). The design of my study aided me in achieving reliability and validity, because I chose to interview five individuals who experienced designing and implementing employee training programs in hospitality small businesses, in Washington D.C., that had desirable results for employees.

Reliability

Considering a study "reliable" often necessitates an analysis on the credibility and dependability of the research (Fusch & Ness, 2017). Dependability is often based on a handful of strategies used by the researcher, like member checking with participants to assess results (Yin, 2018). Another way to test dependability is with an audit trail.

Roulston (2016) recommends researchers clarify the procedures followed in the study to achieve the results using an audit trail. Audit trails are created largely through clarification in one or more of the following ways: the data selection process, the participants selection process, the purpose of the study as communicated to the participants, the transformation throughout the analysis, the techniques used to define and test the credibility of the findings, the findings themselves (Park & Park, 2016). I created an audit trail by clarifying the methodological decision-making process.

Validity

Validity in qualitative research is the precision of results, which assessed through transferability of findings, credibility of research, and confirmability of findings. Researchers attain transferability by providing details regarding the population, procedures, and limitations of a study to ensure future researchers may replicate the study (Palinkas et al., 2015). To ensure transferability I included participants eligibility criteria, the research methods used for the study, and the data analysis process implemented in the study process. Furthermore, I followed an interview protocol and attainted data saturation, thereby increasing the transferability of the study results. In a qualitative study, transferability refers to the ability of researchers to use a previous research result as a based information to conduct other research studies and to improve business practices.

Credibility in research refers to the accuracy of the research findings (Saunders et al., 2016). To achieve credibility, I used data triangulation. Triangulation is a process through which researchers assess interview responses to verify existing data, such as companies' documents (Anderson, 2017). Triangulation can also be used to carefully reviewing the data collected through different methods such as interviews and companies' documents with the aim of achieving a more accurate and valid results (Yin, 2018). Based on existing research and previous findings, I used triangulation as a variety of research methods to collect data on the same research question.

Confirmability refers to assurance that researchers will try to limit biases in the research findings, but rather are primarily and based in fact rather than the opinions of the researchers (Grieb et al., 2015). In addition to improving credibility, member checking is the process by which a researcher can improve a study's accuracy, transferability, and validity, thereby achieving confirmability (Yin, 2018). Once a researcher has achieved these essential components, they have attained confirmability (Anderson, 2017). According to Levitt et al. (2018), qualitative research has more integrity when it is honest and reflective. I attained confirmability in my own research by providing thorough information and detailed descriptions, as well as by conducting member checking.

Transition and Summary

This design of this multiple case study was a qualitative analysis of the strategies hospitality small businesses leaders have used to implement effective training programs leading to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention. The target population for this study consisted of five hospitality small businesses leaders who oversee their companies' training programs located in Washington, DC and have successfully increased employee job satisfaction and retention. By conducting thorough semistructured interviews with open-ended questions and combining it with documents analysis from the leaders, I gained a more thorough understanding of the topic. The business leaders were selected based on their experience in the field, in the size of business selected, in the region, and with the specific implementation project being studied. I obtained approval to conduct this research from the IRB at Walden University, after which I contacted participants and began to familiarize them with the study. The information shared with me by participants was kept surely confidential, then re-checked against the criteria to ensure their participation was additive to the research. From that point, I scheduled and conducted an interview with each business leader in a private or semi-private space in face to face or virtual setting, asking semistructured questions (Appendix B). During each interview, I recorded the participants only with their permission, then transcribed the recording as soon as possible after the interview as I was able. Using the transcriptions, I checked with participants to ensure the information I had collected was accurate and complete, providing opportunities for feedback to participants as we continued the process. A qualitative case study method surely provides research that is accurate and correct, and can be replicated in the future, if others desire (Yin, 2018). I chose to pursue this method to achieve those ends. Similarly, I chose purposive selection to improve my data. Choosing interviewees using purposive participant selection increases the likelihood of data being accurate and unbiased (Levitt et al., 2018). My data interpretation occurred using my interview transcripts and NVivo 10 software, which allowed me to analyze and code the data. I coded and analyzed the data in accordance with my research question. In Section 3, I shared the results, the applicability of the findings to other research studies in the hospitality field, the potential implications for future change, and my own recommendations for future action or research.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

This qualitative multiple case study sought to explore the strategies hospitality small business leaders use to create and implement training programs that effectively increased employees' job satisfaction and job retention levels. The findings from interviews indicated that several different companies have utilized training strategies and managerial strategies that have successfully increased employee satisfaction and limited employee turnover. The results of this study on the training and organizational practices of hospitality managers can have significant impacts on overall productivity and workplace environment in the hospitality industry. The results of this study suggest that, in order to increase employee job satisfaction and job retention, hospitality managers could utilize one-on-one purpose-driven training models, demonstrate investment in employees, and foster a sense of open communication and community among staff members.

Presentation of the Findings

The primary research question used in this study was "What strategies do hospitality small business leaders use to create and implement effective training programs leading to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention?" In the interest of exploring this research question, I interviewed five hospitality business managers with nine open-ended interview questions to explore the strategies they utilized to increase employee retention rates and employee satisfaction. In the interest of preserving participant anonymity, each participant was identified with a numbered code (P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5). Data analysis revealed three major themes in the managers' responses: (a) one-on-one purpose-driven training, (b) demonstrating investment in employees, and (c) fostering a sense of open communication and community among staff members (see Table 1).

Table 1

Summary of Emergent Themes and Participant Acknowledgment

Theme and description	Occurrence
1: One-on-one purpose-driven training	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5
2: Demonstrating investment in employees	P1, P3, P5
3: Fostering a sense of open communication and community among staff members	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5

Theme 1: One-on-One Purpose-Driven Training

All participants identified one-on-one purpose driven training as a crucial part of retaining employees. Every hospitality business is a unique one, with its own schedule, its own set of events, its own set of protocols, and its own set of expectations. Oftentimes, a significant part of an employee turnaround problem in a hospitality business has to do with a lack of hands-on training. Without understanding the particular standards and practices of a hospitality business, a new employee can quickly become frustrated and lost. Thus, every participant indicated that onsite, face-to-face, one-on-one (or one-on-two) training is a necessary part of the training process. The findings within this theme aligned with expectations of the conceptual framework. Specifically, these findings aligned with McClelland's assertion that employers should meet the needs of their employees to create job satisfaction and retention (Heimerl et al., 2020; Moorer, 2014).

The ways in which participants described new employee training at their hospitality businesses had similar arcs. Training generally starts with a large-group meeting in which many new employees are given overviews of company handbooks and policies that govern job responsibilities/behaviors. This aligned with the literature suggesting how organizations develop norms which, over time, guide expected behavior patterns (Khurana & Joshi, 2017). These norms may be formal or informal but help employees understand patterns of behavior that are a part of the workplace culture early in the hiring process (Sauser & Sims, 2018). Participants discussed strategies to maximize the efficacy of these meetings and training procedures. P4 discussed utilizing a "new hire orientation" to discuss general business expectations, benefits, and other general business knowledge. P5 discussed the importance of utilizing multiple speakers who can tailor training program content to a particular presentation or group as well as having explicit, actionable ideas: "What I found was very important in doing these training programs, is you need to make sure that the employees know what they're there for." In keeping with this idea, P3 discussed the importance of giving new hires introductory materials that are tailored to the business and how it functions, so individual department managers at their business write training manuals for their own new hires.

This allows their new hires to constantly have reference material for instructive/managerial presence. This is particularly important since certain jobs within hospitality—housekeeping, for example—require a gradual release of the new hire into a high-speed, uniquely independent space, in which no other coworkers may be giving them any kind of instruction, input, or assistance.

After this general overview is given, new hires are often paired with a trainer who is deeply familiar with the day-to-day protocol and duties of the particular department the new hire will be working with. This practice also aligned with the literature. For example, Radin Umar et al. (2018) found that warmth and support are both key elements of organizational friendliness, which can be bolstered by fostering positive and supportive relationships. This process functions differently in different businesses; though all participants saw new hires gradually building on an existing set of responsibilities, the timelines for these shifts into employee independence are different. P2, for example, discussed how the training process at their business involved constant one-on-one mentorship for a roughly 2-week period with a gradual release into independence tailored to the individual new hire’s comfort level. The first few days consist of the new hire watching the trainer perform the tasks they will be expected to perform while getting comfortable speaking with guests and other employees. Over time, new hires are allowed to take over their position at their own pace, gradually taking on more responsibilities as they become familiar with them. These mentorship programs are important for helping new hires establish themselves; they simultaneously allow new hires to learn how to carry out their new position’s duties at a pace they find comfortable, forge connections with their departmental leaders, and help build community with other employees.

P5 also identified designated trainer programs as an excellent means of acknowledging an exceptional employee’s achievement and giving them a taste of managerial experience. At P5’s business, new hire trainers are appointed by department heads. According to P5, trainers are the highest-performing employees in the department and are afforded both higher pay rates and higher departmental status for training new hires. By entrusting trainers with these new employees, managers suggest that the trainers are being prepared for supervisory roles within the business. P5 says that this practice is good for morale and turnover; early on, new hires are exposed to top-performing employees who are aware that they have a future within the organization.

The literature suggests that this approach of training new hires through high-performing employees is a positive idea. McClelland’s needs theory lists the main needs employees experience as those for achievement, belonging, and power (Ferinia & Hutagalung, 2017; Wakabi, 2016). Through this approach, new hires are trained with particular skill sets by established staff members, who serve both as trainers and significant social connections. By training new employees with fostering particular skill sets in mind, those new employees begin to accumulate knowledge and abilities meaningful to the organization; this fulfills a worker’s desire for accomplishments (Wakabi, 2016). Relationships can also be forged, leading to positive affiliations with others, which fulfills a worker’s desire for affiliation (McClelland et al., 1980). Finally, by granting established employees an opportunity to train new employees, established employees are afforded a level of power (McClelland et al., 1980). Through this mentorship experience, established employees may become more cognizant of their investment in the business' success or more cognizant of their growing ability to ascend in rank within the business (Scholer & Miele, 2016). Additionally, studies have shown that on-the-job training and job shadowing positively impact employees' senses of satisfaction, which, in turn, increases work performance and retention (Hanaysha & Tahir, 2016; Jaworski et al., 2018).

Some participants also use other trainers to help new hires learn. P3 explained the different schools of thought regarding this issue, pointing out how using HR employees and using outside employee trainers are both viable ways to train new hires. P3 conceded that using established employees to train others is both more cost-effective for the business and better for employee morale overall; by entrusting an established employee with new responsibilities, it demonstrates a sense of trust in that employee, gives that employee an opportunity to prove their institutional commitment and knowledge to management, and is often less expensive than bringing on an outside contractor. But this approach to training is still costly, as it requires an established employee who is familiar with the business' practices to work at a reduced speed in order to ensure that a new employee—who will not be ready to work independently for some time—is adequately supported in their initial attempts to learn how to properly work. P5 discussed how a new employee cannot be expected to complete a full shift for the first 2 weeks of employment, which includes two to three days of full-time training. P2 pays trainees at a reduced rate until training is completed, in part to offset the cost of lost trainer work time.

Though staff training new hires seems imperfect due to its high initial investment, the alternative—in which new employees are thrown into a new situation with minimal training—is a key contributor to major turnover. P2 cited this approach as an archaic one, saying, “When I started, it was pretty much ‘this is how you do it,’ and you were thrown to the wolves.” This basic model of demonstration was not giving new employees the support they needed to properly assimilate into the work culture of the hospitality businesses they were working in. P2 also discussed how not allowing new hires to work at their own pace can overwhelm them with new information, ultimately leading to burnout and turnover. This aligned with some of the literature as Sauser and Sims (2018) determined that new employees are often bombarded with new organizational information upon arrival. Consequently, participants emphasized a hands-on approach to employee training as a key part of reducing turnover, despite the possibility of increased cost. In some ways, turnover is an inevitable part of the hospitality business. As P1 pointed out, hourly workers often end up leaving hospitality jobs early in their employment. However, as P3 noted, constant new employee turnover is a significant expense, as in addition to the lost work efficiency due to the training, the returns on new employee investment disappear.

It is also worth mentioning that some participants indicated that certain employee training protocols do not take this form. P4, for example, discussed how while module-based online training is occasionally utilized at their business, it is near-exclusively for the purposes of food safety training, liquor training, and compliance training. These training sessions, although important for the business, seem to function more as legal formalities than as important venues through which the business' protocol can be learned. While discussing these online trainings, P4 said,

> with the online training, it's just very, very tough to do specific training for hotels, but if they have to, or there is a need for certifications in order to keep up with the city or government guidelines, then that's probably the best for those kinds of classes. P4's comparison further demonstrates the extent to which a highly personalized work training can positively impact a new employee's initial buy-in to a new position.

In short, all participants agreed that a highly personalized, one-on-one training experience with an established staff member working in a given new hire's department had extremely positive outcomes for building organizational community, reducing turnover rates, and increased employee satisfaction. These training approaches, participants argued, allowed for new hires to intimately understand the duties they were tasked with while building important personal and professional relationships. Participants observed that personalized approaches to learning pace and comprehensive support from established employees allowed new hires to better carry out their new set of responsibilities. Similarly, participants found that new hire trainers' morale was boosted, as the responsibility of training a new employee has positive implications for mobility within the organization. These observations aligned with some of the literature, which suggested that the practices participants advocated for had significant overlaps with McClelland's needs theory and existing scholarship surrounding employee training and turnover (Hanaysha & Tahir, 2016; Jaworski et al., 2018; McClelland et al., 1980). Nevertheless, there are instances, such as in Vroom's expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964), in which not all people associate performance with rewards (Heckmann et al., 2016).

Table 2

Theme 1: Interview Questions, Interpretation and Analysis, and Emergent Themes

Excerpts relevant to Theme 1	Interpretation and analysis	Emergent themes
P1, Q1: "[...] we would have onsite training during the day. And that way, if someone came in, you know, who was a maid or cook or housekeeping, or even someone at the front desk, they would leave their shift and come to the conference room, and we would have discussions about being a better leader, working in teams, working together [...] and happily working."	The participant found that working one-on-one with new employees allowed for significant understandings of the culture of the employee, employee expectations, and the functions of individual workers to be explicitly discussed.	Working directly with new hires to ensure that they have a thorough understanding of all facets of the business they may encounter during the day; having explicit purposes for individual experiences within a larger training session.
P2, Q3: "When I started, it was pretty much, 'this is how you do it,' and you were thrown to the wolves. We have revamped that in the past year. [...] Usually I train one person a week [...] sometimes one person every other week is all we can usually get trained, just so we know that they are fully trained. So, there is a longer timeframe there."	Understanding that the training process has historically been very cutthroat for new hires; critically considering the time frame with which employees are trained in order to ensure that learning happens on a schedule amenable to the employee.	Ensuring that new hires feel adequately supported throughout the initial training process, with the ultimate intention of building their confidence for continued independent work.
P3, Q4: "[The company P3 worked for] had a very intensive training course for all their employees[...]. It was tough, especially in the sales, and looking back on it [...] corporations did not want to maintain that branch of the corporation because of overhead [...]. You don't want to throw out training, you can't, you know, because it's tied so much to retention."	Cost-cutting has previously been a reason why training has been underemphasized in hospitality employment, however, the problem it has created with retention rates has been very impactful for the industry at large.	Understanding that employee retention is a major part of inefficient spending within the hospitality business, and that up-front investment in employees is a necessary part of changing this.
P4, Q1: "The most effective [...] is the one-on-one training. Especially in the hotel industry, many of the positions that we have are physically based. So one-on-one with a trainer has been most effective. But I've also used a classroom style to do, like, a new hire orientation, where information needs to be passed out about benefits and [...] things that we expect at the hotel."	Although one-on-one training is a necessary part of working in the hospitality industry, there are points at which different training methodologies can also be helpful.	Recognizing the importance of familiarizing employees with all different types of organizational expectations and incorporating classroom learning-styled experiences into training.

P5, Q2: "You need to make sure that in housekeeping, that you're not giving a housekeeper still 10 rooms to clean when they're training someone, the workload has to be less. And the money has to be more in order for them to properly and have the time to train someone else."	One-on-one training demands that experienced trainer employees are properly accommodated and compensated for the extra work they are taking on.	By properly investing in training, existing employees and new employees can both benefit.

Theme 2: Demonstrating Investment in Employees

Participants concerned about employee turnover within their organization often described making attempts at investing in employees' skills. As P1 articulated, in a highly transient industry filled with hourly workers, it is often challenging to build a roster of dedicated staff members genuinely committed to the organization's success. Additionally, challenging is that without visible examples of management committing to the ongoing growth and success of employees, there is limited incentive for hourly employees to make more significant buy-ins to the organization. In order to counteract this cycle of turnover and create an organization that employees commit to in a more substantial way, P1, P3, and P5 all advocated for demonstrating investment in employees. There are two major ways in which participants discussed demonstrating investment in employees: organizational mobility and training/professional development opportunities (Rasheed et al., 2020).

Organizational Mobility

Participants indicated that the hourly wage nature of lower levels of hospitality work often leads to high rates of employee turnover. Though there may be significant room for growth within a hospitality business' structure, oftentimes, new employees are seeking an hourly wage job with a limited barrier to entry that they do not necessarily anticipate turning into a career. P1 discussed how limited organizational mobility leads to high rates of turnover within hospitality businesses, particularly due to the high proportion of hourly workers. Without demonstrating a clear path for organizational mobility, P1 argued, few hourly workers will be encouraged to make the effort to contribute significantly to a hospitality organization. Through giving opportunities for career advancement to high-performing hourly workers, participants found raises in morale and in reductions in turnover. These findings aligned with the study conducted by Rasheed et al. (2020). P5's mentorship strategies, in which the highest-performing workers help train new workers and develop new training materials, demonstrate a successful means of increasing hourly employee buy-in. By giving established, high-performing hourly employees the chance to act as mentors to new employees, P5 simultaneously trains promising employees for managerial positions and illustrates to incoming employees that sticking with their organization allows hourly workers room for growth. P1 also found that giving hourly workers promotions is a necessary part of decreasing turnover rates, pointing out that "The sky's the limit in hospitality." This finding is bolstered by McClelland's needs theory, which suggests that providing opportunities for organizational advancement allows employees with needs for power or achievement a means of channeling that need into organizational success (McClelland et al., 1980; Schultheiss et al., 2014). Organizational advancement allows employees with a need for achievement an opportunity to accomplish more challenging goals while proving their own competency (Mikkelsen et al., 2017). In this case employees can help meet organizational goals while simultaneously finding a means of self-actualization (McClelland et al., 1980). Similarly, Kennedy et al. (2015) found that offering employees opportunities for growth increased staff retention rates.

Training/Professional Development Opportunities

Professional development and training sessions allow employees the chance to expand their personal marketability through means paid for by the company. By offering additional training and professional development programs to employees, managers show an eagerness to improve employees' investment in the business and success in the business hierarchy. This conclusion aligns with the literature as Esteban-Lloret et al. (2018) found that employees who have been adequately trained impact organizational growth positively. However, the process of developing and using a training program can be time-consuming and costly (Gilbert et al., 2016; Jaworski et al., 2018). Still, some type of training for employees is essential to the growth of any organization (Gilbert et al., 2016) and Jaworski et al. (2018) found that employee training opportunities led to greater levels of employee satisfaction, employee training, and customer satisfaction. P1 discussed how giving employees training opportunities demonstrated an investment in their ongoing success. P1 said that by taking advantage of professional development opportunities made available to them, hourly employees could easily make themselves appear more adept on the job market. By giving employees opportunities to become more marketable, P1 shows a desire to have their employees succeed in their future career endeavors. This shows an altruistic impulse which would perhaps be seen in a positive light by employees who may not have been given opportunities for professional growth in the past. As P1 said, "Professional development is the long-term success because even if [an employee doesn't] even stay at the hotel, [they] could take those professional development skills and work elsewhere." P3 echoed this sentiment and gave employees who completed workplace training certificates of completion, which could be shared with potential future employers.

High-quality employee learning opportunities can profoundly bolster workplace efficiency, improve cultural climate, and empower employees to take an active role in the business' success, low-quality opportunities can be a hindrance to employee-manager relations (Frye et al., 2020). When looking to demonstrate investment in employees, managers must prudently select the training they offer. P5's managerial position involved participating heavily in the development of learning materials for her organization; they discussed the importance of learning in identifying and supporting a quality candidate. P5 stressed that if a candidate is not motivated to learn and listen to effective training material, the quality of that training material is lost on them. P5 recognized the importance of seeking out active learners during the hiring process but placed particular emphasis on the importance of targeting employee education opportunities to respond to actual organizational needs and problems. P5 discussed how training sessions without explicit aims can be an expensive waste of time for an organization and limit buy-in from employees during later training sessions. By better tailoring training sessions to respond to the business' specific set of challenges, employees' expressed concerns, and a pragmatic understanding of what improves hospitality workers' development, managers appear to be in-touch with their employees' needs. Part of this involves understanding the demands of employees' work and life schedules, as noted in the study by Charles-Pauvers, (2020). P3 discussed the importance of creating flexible time slots for training, to ensure that all employees are able to participate in training sessions on a timeline that is optimal for them. This consideration demonstrates that employee investment is widely available and practiced and demonstrates an interest in building the skills of all employees. Employees with a need for achievement as outlined by McClelland et al. (1980) would positively benefit from this type of investment, as it demonstrates a tangible means of growing an achievement-minded employee's skill set. Although this may not be as beneficial for employees with different needs, this affirms to employees with a need for achievement that they have experienced skill-based growth while simultaneously, in many cases, providing them with tangible documentation of that growth (McClelland et al., 1980).

More direct, incentive-based encouragement garnered mixed reactions. P1 was skeptical of the effectiveness of cash incentives, describing them as having a much more temporary impact than something like demonstrated organizational mobility. P1 stated that while a small cash bonus may increase momentary satisfaction for one employee, promoting exceptional hourly employees to salaried supervisory roles sends a clear message that hard work is rewarded, and demonstrates the type of incentive a dedicated hourly employee may benefit from. P3, however, gave cash incentives to employees who completed a certain number of training sessions. This allows a sort of "doubling down" on employee incentives, which may encourage employees to complete more training sessions but may also send a mixed message about what the importance of the training sessions are. The results aligned with Marshall et al. (2015), although not the results of other studies such as Singh and Behera's (2016) who found that employees with achievement needs may feel a greater sense of accomplishment from goal achievement than from monetary rewards. These findings were also evident in the studies by Deci and Ryan (2000), Lichtenberg et al. (2016), Rasskazova et al. (2016), and (Rybnicek et al., 2019). These studies related to achieving self-determination and self-actualization, psychological needs and their environment, physiological and psychological needs and desires, and the need to be powerful and in control, respectively. In addition, both McClelland’s (McClelland et al., 1980) and self-determination theories (Deci & Ryan, 2000) are used by researchers to posit that employees with achievement needs may feel more satisfaction from achieving their goals rather than from the benefits that can accompany monetary rewards. Nevertheless, giving employees opportunities for organizational mobility and encouraging employees to develop themselves as professionals both demonstrate employee investment. Participants claimed that by demonstrating a desire to make employees stronger assets to the business and by demonstrating that dedicated employees had the ability to grow within the organization, new employees recognized that their hourly positions could turn into substantial careers. Participants indicated that utilizing these strategies resulted in positive impacts for employee retention and employee satisfaction.

Table 3

Theme 2: Interview Questions, Interpretations and Analysis, and Emergent Themes

Excerpts Relevant to Theme #2	Interpretation and Analysis	Emergent Themes
P1, Q2: "[...]having training was good too. Because you can always use that training, help you grow as a leader and use that on your LinkedIn account, on your resume."	Professional development and additional training opportunities help employees become more marketable and stronger assets to the company.	Demonstrating investment in employees' ongoing professional success helps retention, as it signals to employees that managers recognize their value.
P3, Q1: "We also add value to training to make them want to participate in the training, we made sure they understood we were going to reward them at the end of the training session with some certificates from the hotel, that would say they had completed x hours of training on a specific topic. So they can keep that for their records, they can take it with them for life, if they were going somewhere else, that certificate would go in their human resource file [...] at the end of the year, if they had completed X number of courses with us, we sometimes would add an incentive, financial reward."	Doubling down on rewards to ensure that employees have multiple incentives -- P3's employees both receive financial incentive for participating in training sessions and professional development documentation, to make them more appealing job candidates if they choose to leave.	By encouraging employees to take part in more training sessions for modest financial fees, employees become more competent, confident, and valuable.
P5, Q2: "And the status that designated trainer has, it's a personal pride thing, is another strategy that we use because managers don't always have time to train employees on how to do the day-to-day tasks. But if you elevate the designated trainer, that's a step for a lot of people to be future supervisors to be future assistant managers."	Granting greater supervisory responsibilities to employee trainers allows new hires' first point of contact with established employees to be positive, as employee trainers have been implicitly selected for future managerial opportunities.	By giving established, committed employees' opportunities to advance within the organization, multiple employees may experience boosts in morale.

Theme 3: Fostering a Sense of Communication and Community Among Staff

Participants found that coordinating communication between different levels of the business is a critically important skill to reduce turnaround and increase employee satisfaction. Although many different departments are perpetually at work within a hospitality business, oftentimes, they have relatively limited interactions with each other, and vastly different types of relationships with different supervisory and managerial figures. To foster a sense of community, it is necessary to keep lines of communication and interaction open between employees working in different departments. As P3 said, "It is like a city, you're running a miniature city [...]. But within that city, you [have] to make sure all the citizens are respected. [...] And they feel that respect when you communicate." P2's emphasis on building employee reporting relationships which are less dictated by hierarchy and more dictated by meeting the practical needs of the organization pays respect to this point. P2 has found that top-down policy change dictation has often been counterproductive for their organization; P2 said that while upper management can design and force employees to implement policies which work on paper, without proper staff input, the policies may end up being counterproductive. P2 characterizes staff members as having intimate knowledge of how day-to-day organizational practices actually run, which managers often do not.

To ensure constant communicability between different departments within the business, P2 has established an open-door policy between managers and staff; staff members are always allowed to ask managers questions or address problems with them, in person, via phone, or via text. P2 indicated that this is a particularly popular approach with new hires, who feel a great sense of comfort from having constant lines of open communication. This bodes well for ongoing reductions in new hire turnover. This aligned with existing leadership theory, as key tenets of transformational leadership include active listening and clear communication between multiple levels of employee hierarchy (Stahl, 1983). Transformational leaders also recognize the need for employee autonomy in making decisions, in order to instill a sense of coherent organizational trust and support (Phaneuf et al., 2016).

Feedback regarding employee training is another crucially important part of organizational communicativity. As discussed in Theme 1, in order for new hires to be adequately supported -- and turnover rates to be reduced -- attentive and thoughtful training programs must be developed. P2 discussed staff feedback as a key driver for improving staff retention rates. The open lines of communication P2 established with their employees allowed for candid conversations exploring why new hires left the organization; when P2 repeatedly heard that new hires became quickly burned out from overwhelming approaches to training, P2 worked to restructure the organization’s training program. P3 and P5 both discussed the importance of using employee surveys after new employee training. Through directly surveying new hires who had just completed employee training, P3 and P5 came to better understand which training strategies worked, determine which trainers were effective, and find new employee-suggested strategies for effective training approaches. As P5 stated, “Sometimes [the feedback you get] is not the feedback you expected.

But it is important for your own personal growth. And also, a lot of the employees have great ideas [about] how to strengthen the program." By establishing a culture of collaboration and communicativity early on, new employees can recognize that their voices can be heard by management; by listening actively to employee needs, management can create more dynamic and effective training practices, ultimately reducing turnover. This also speaks to the type of nonhierarchical communication culture which a transformational leader would seek to develop in a workplace; transformational leaders believe that sharing information together can create significant harmony and productivity within a workplace (Dong et al., 2017: Phaneuf et al., 2016)

Communication between different people in different departments is also an important consideration when improving community building measures. As mentioned previously, although all departmental members in a hospitality business must work together, they are often fairly divided and disparate in their actual responsibility sets; housekeepers and restaurant managers, for example, likely have little to do with each other on a day-to-day basis. P3 stressed the importance of creating a cohesive informational infrastructure which allows coordination between somewhat disparate employee and managerial entities. Along with large company-wide meetings, P3 utilizes print and virtual communication approaches to reach all of their business' employees. P3 also has managers meet up together periodically to discuss strategies for greater interdepartmental coordination. P3 and P5 also both suggested that employee community building through group activities is another strong means of building meaningful intradepartmental bond. P3 discussed holding activities like company picnics and volleyball competitions, whereas P5 discussed organizing book clubs, speech classes, and family-centered events. Interdepartmental community building has positive implications for creating meaningful affective bonds between employees and their workplace, which has positive implications for limiting turnover. When employees understand themselves as a part of a personally significant affective community, they become more committed to that community's success. This aligned with McClelland's theory of affiliation needs (McClelland et al., 1980). Individuals with affiliation needs find their greatest levels of work-based satisfaction when they are happy with the social climate they exist in (McClelland et al., 1980). This is particularly important for hospitality workers, as individuals with a need for affiliation often perform well as customer service representatives (Schultheiss et al., 2014).

Another element of communication within hospitality businesses which is often underemphasized is the importance of accommodating employees who do not speak English. Many hourly hospitality employees are not native English speakers and may have a limited ability to communicate in English. P4 stressed the importance of offering training sessions in languages other than English to ensure these employees are adequately accommodated. P4 accomplished this by hiring separate trainers who were multilingual and could facilitate English-language training in the employees' language. Beyond serving a clear practical purpose, this practice demonstrates to non-English speakers that their contributions to the business are important and that their success is valued. P1 also discussed the importance of multilingual skills for staff members, saying that because people from all over the world visit Washington, DC, it is always necessary to have multilingual staff who can communicate with customers who have limited English. To P1's point, multilingual employees can serve as a special asset to a business no matter what their position within the organization is. This speaks to transformational leader's commitments to including places for all employees within the business and taking an asset-based view of employees (Khurana & Joshi, 2017). Transformational leaders seek to encourage and motivate employees to see their individual potential (Northouse, 2018).

Table 4

Theme 3: Interview Questions, Interpretation and Analysis, and Emergent Themes

Excerpts Relevant to Theme #3	Interpretation and Analysis	Emergent Themes
P1, Q7: “We have people from all around the world [in Washington, D.C.][...] if I can’t speak that language that a guest is speaking, I would need to have someone on staff who can speak that language.”	Multilingual staff members are an invaluable asset to a hospitality business in a major metropolitan area. High numbers of international visitors suggest that any non-English language a hospitality worker has is highly valuable.	Within a hospitality business, it is critically important to embrace a sense of communicativity and community between native English speakers and non-English speakers.
P2, Q4: “We have the open door policy in our full management staff, that if there’s ever a problem, or concern [...] they can come directly to us whether we’re in [our offices] or [...] they call or text us.”	By allowing staff to ask managers questions and share concerns with managers whenever they (i.e. the staff members) deem it necessary, managers demonstrate a high level of openness and trust to their employees.	A high level of communicativity between staff members at various levels of the business’ hierarchy is extremely important for ensuring setbacks are adequately addressed.
P3, Q9: “It’s like a city, you’re running a miniature city, you know. But within that city, you have to make sure all the citizens are respected. Respect is key. And by all the different levels, and they feel that respect when you communicate.”	Multi-level communication is a challenging but extremely necessary part of hospitality management. Although employees are constantly working with each other to ensure the business is running properly, the individual departments within the business often run with little awareness of each other.	By fostering a sense of community within the workplace, hospitality managers can help ensure that all employees feel valued and respected.
P4, Q3: “I think the biggest barrier was actually a language barrier. [...] And what we did was I held what is called a train the trainer course. [...] So the different trainers [were bilingual’ so they can facilitate it in the new hires language. If [employees are not proficient in English,] it will be hard for them to understand the materials or information from the documents.”	Employees with limited English language skills may not be adequately supported by a training program; it is necessary to accommodate non-native English speakers to ensure that they feel adequately supported and can understand their duties as an employee.	Hospitality workplaces with a significant number of workers who do not speak English must ensure that non-English speakers have adequate language accommodations.
P5, Q5: “sometimes [the feedback you get] is not the feedback you expected. But it is important for your own personal growth. And also, a lot of the employees have great ideas [about] how to	Constructive communication with employees, particularly regarding training, may end up surprising hospitality managers. Managerial conceptions of efficacy and employee conceptions of efficacy may vary wildly.	Hospitality managers must be able to graciously accept constructive criticism from staff members; this type of gracious, well-informed dialogue can have excellent implications for improving employee experiences, workplace

strengthen the program."	climate, workflow, and turnover.

Applications to Professional Practice

The annual turnover rate for hospitality industry employees in 2018 was over 70%, over 7 times higher than the average annual turnover rate (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). This study sought to identify strategies which hospitality managers used to keep low rates of turnover. The approaches which participants indicated were successful were fairly similar to each other and aligned with the existing literature on hospitality-related turnover, employee needs theory, and transformational leadership theory. Participants indicated they had successfully addressed high turnover rates in their businesses through changing their approaches to training, communication, and employee investment.

The strategies identified in this study may help other hospitality managers conceptualize and implement new approaches to employee training practices, new approaches to intra-organizational communication, new approaches to employee compensation structures, and new approaches to employee advancement structures. Organizations seeking to modify managerial structures and hiring practices or seeking to incorporate McClelland's needs theory into organizational practice could use elements of this study as a blueprint for application (McClelland et al., 1980). Participants in this study indicated that one-on-one purpose-driven training; demonstrating investment in employees; and fostering a sense of communication and community among staff were all effective practices which led to meaningful decreases in employee turnover. These approaches have been corroborated by existing research on employee turnover, in particular Jaworski et al. (2018) and Hanaysha and Tahir (2016). The findings, conclusions, and recommendations from this study can help hospitality managers limit their organizations' turnover rates.

Implications for Social Change

The results of this study may contribute to positive social change by increasing the number of upwardly mobile hospitality employees. If hospitality managers put a meaningful focus on turning hourly hospitality workers into salaried hospitality employees by pointedly developing their professional skills, this could have positive implications for those lower-income workers' abilities to become upwardly mobile. By limiting employee turnover rates within the hospitality sector, hospitality businesses could become more stable, which has positive implications for continued employment for hospitality workers.

Recommendations for Action

The results presented in this study could help hospitality business managers create cohesive sets of guidelines to ensure that employee turnover rates among new hospitality employees are substantially reduced. Hospitality managers should consider these recommendations:

- Deliberately design new hire training with self-paced, gradated releases of responsibility;
- Utilize mentorship-based new hire training;

- Work collaboratively with staff members to ensure new hire training accurately represents the responsibilities new hires will be entrusted with and the protocols new hires will be expected to enact;
- Demonstrate investment in employees by granting high-performing hourly workers opportunities for managerial experience;
- Offer regular opportunities for professional development to hourly and salaried workers alike;
- Collect feedback from new hire trainees to find new ways to better the training process;
- Foster a climate of open communication and community within hospitality organizations; and
- Create outreach activities to allow employees to create more amorous relationships with their coworkers.

To encourage the use of the aforementioned strategies, I provided each participant with a summary of survey findings after this study has been made available to the public. I will share similar summaries of my findings with managers and owners within the hospitality industry, distributing my work at hospitality events and conferences.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study helped expand knowledge regarding the strategies hospitality business managers utilize to reduce employee turnover. Although this study helped both create new knowledge and confirm previous research conclusions, the limited scope of the study means that more work is to be done to help further our collective understanding of this topic. Pondering the limitations of this qualitative multi-case study have helped me identify several areas for future research. A limitation of the study which could be addressed in further research is location. The study focused on hospitality businesses within Washington, D.C. This hospitality market has a fairly high level of demand, competition, and diversity which may not accurately reflect other hospitality markets. Conducting further research using a similar qualitative multi-case methodology in different hospitality markets could reveal further strategies based on addressing employee turnover and could help generate strategies with greater transferability.

The study's participants were employed by a mix of small corporate and non-corporate hospitality businesses. Consequently, the levels of autonomy which individual participants had in conceptualizing, enacting, and reviewing turnover-related policies was somewhat variable. By performing multi-case studies exploring the strategies which either chain hospitality managers or independent hospitality managers use to address employee turnover, future researchers could help explain how different types of ownership impact managerial decision making as it pertains to curbing employee turnover.

Another way in which strategies regarding employee turnover in hospitality could be explored is by exploring employee perspectives. As all of the study's participants noted, communicativity with employees is the best way of limiting employee turnover. Two potential approaches which future researchers could use are (a) interviewing employees at a single hospitality business about their perspectives on turnover or (b) by exploring tools managers have designed to curb employee turnover through using employee perspectives.

Reflection

Although working through this Doctor of Business Administration dissertation has been very challenging, it has been a deeply rewarding process. Even though balancing my familial, scholastic, and professional responsibilities has not been the easiest thing, through the DBA process, I developed a stronger sense of what I am able to accomplish, how to manage my time more efficiently, and what I truly value. Writing this dissertation was a formidable academic challenge for me, which really pushed me to reconsider the assumptions I made regarding the subject I was studying. As I assembled my literature review, I began to really understand and internalize what the process of reducing turnover means. For a manager, to reduce turnover is to make the effort to understand what their employees' struggles are as people and to understand how their employees perceive their shared environment. Although it is often challenging for a manager to keenly understand their employees' challenges, concerns, perceptions, and desires, to successfully do so has tremendous implications for both business success and interpersonal bonds.

Were I to perform this study again, I would budget more time for recruiting eligible participants. Although I reached data saturation through the small sample size that I had, an increased data pool could have significantly improved my data collection process. Adding a few more participants to my study could have exposed me to new and interesting perspectives on hospitality management and hospitality in turnover. Generally speaking, though, I feel a great sense of satisfaction and pride in completing my degree. I am profoundly grateful to those who helped me through this journey.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore strategies hospitality small business leaders use to implement effective training programs leading to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention. The five selected participants -- all managers of Washington, DC hospitality businesses -- discussed the different approaches they took to address to limit the rates of turnover at their respective businesses. During data analysis, I identified three major themes pertinent to the research question that aligned with existing literature on employee turnover: 1) one-on-one purpose-driven training, 2) demonstrating investment in employees, and 3) fostering a sense of open communication and community among staff members.

The study findings and literature review suggested that, to effectively decrease rates of staff turnover, managers should deliberately design new hire training with self-paced, gradated releases of responsibility; utilize mentorship-based new hire training; work collaboratively with staff members to ensure new hire training accurately represents the responsibilities new hires will be entrusted with and the protocols new hires will be expected to enact; demonstrate investment in employees by granting high-performing hourly workers opportunities for managerial experience; offer regular opportunities for professional development to hourly and salaried workers alike; collect feedback from new hire trainees to find new ways to better the training process; foster a climate of open communication and community within hospitality organizations; and create outreach activities to allow employees to create more amorous relationships with their coworkers. The strategies and themes within this study may provide hospitality managers with new frameworks and tools for addressing the problems of employee turnover, training practices, and internal communication inefficiencies.

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Appendix: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

1. What strategies have you used to effectively train employees in your organization that led to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention?

2. Of these strategies, which ones did you find worked best to increase job satisfaction and employee retention?

3. What were the principal barriers you have encountered when you first attempted to implement effective training programs that increased job satisfaction and employee retention?

4. How did your organization address the principal challenges to implementing its successful strategies for increasing job satisfaction and employee retention?

5. How did your employees respond to your strategies in creating training programs designed to lead to an acceptable level of job satisfaction and employee retention?

6. What strategies have you found to be ineffective for creating job satisfaction and retaining employees?

7. What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies you have used for increasing job satisfaction and retaining employees?

8. Which of those strategies would you consider the most valuable for increasing employee job satisfaction and retention through training?

9. What else would you like to discuss about your organization's strategies to implement effective training programs for increasing employee job satisfaction and retention?